

**Final Mitigated Negative Declaration
for the
Paramount Timberland Vineyard Conversion
CAL FIRE Timber Harvesting Plan 4-16-004 ELD
El Dorado County, California
State Clearinghouse Number 2018102036**



prepared by:

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)
The Lead Agency Pursuant to Section 21082.1 of the
California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

CAL FIRE Resource Management – Environmental Protection Program
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MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

Introduction and Regulatory Context

Stage of CEQA Document Development

- ☐ **Administrative Draft.** This CEQA document is in preparation by California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) staff.
- ☐ **Public Document.** A Notice of Preparation (NOP) was been filed by CAL FIRE at the State Clearinghouse on October 15, 2018 and is being circulated for a 30-day agency and public review period. The public review period ends on November 14, 2018. Instructions for submitting written comments are provided on Pages 5 and 6 of this document.
- ☒ **Final CEQA Document.** This Final CEQA document contains the changes made by the Department following consideration of comments received during the public and agency review period. The changes are displayed in strike-out text for deletions and underlined text for insertions. The CEQA administrative record supporting this document is on file, and available for review, at CAL FIRE's Sacramento Headquarters, Environmental Protection Program, which is located in the Natural Resources Building, 1416 Ninth Street, 15th Floor, Sacramento, California.

Introduction

This Final ~~Draft~~ Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND¹) describes the environmental impact analysis conducted for the proposed project. This document was prepared by Sierra Ecosystem Associates (SEA) staff utilizing information gathered from a number of sources including research and field review of the proposed Project area and consultation with environmental planners and other experts on staff at other public agencies. Pursuant to Section 21082.1 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the Lead Agency, California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE), has reviewed and analyzed the IS/MND and declares that the statements made in this document reflect CAL FIRE's independent judgment as Lead Agency pursuant to CEQA. CAL FIRE further finds that the proposed Project, which includes revised activities and mitigation measures designed to minimize environmental impacts, will not result in significant adverse effects on the environment.

Regulatory Guidance

This IS/MND has been prepared by SEA and reviewed by CAL FIRE to evaluate potential environmental effects which could result following approval and implementation of the proposed project. This document has been prepared in accordance with current CEQA Statutes (Public Resources Code [PRC] §21000 *et seq.*) and current CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations [CCR] §15000 *et seq.*).

An Initial Study (IS) is prepared by a lead agency to determine if a project may have a significant effect on the environment (14 CCR § 15063[a]), and thus, to determine the appropriate environmental document. In accordance with CEQA Guidelines §15070, a "public agency shall prepare ... a proposed negative declaration or mitigated negative declaration ... when: (a) The IS shows that there is no substantial evidence

¹ A list and definition of the acronyms and symbols used in this CEQA document is presented on pages 58-59.

... that the project may have a significant impact upon the environment, or (b) The IS identifies potentially significant effects but revisions to the project plans or proposal are agreed to by the applicant and such revisions will reduce potentially significant effects to a less-than-significant level.” In this circumstance, the lead agency prepares a written statement describing its reasons for concluding that the proposed project will not have a significant effect on the environment and, therefore, does not require the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR). This IS/MND conforms to these requirements and to the content requirements of CEQA Guidelines Section 15071.

Purpose of the ~~Draft~~ Final MND

CAL FIRE has primary authority for carrying out the proposed project and is the lead agency under CEQA. The purpose of this IS/MND is to present to the public and reviewing agencies the environmental consequences of implementing the proposed project and describe the adjustments made to the project to avoid significant environmental effects or reduce them to a less-than-significant level. This disclosure document is being made available to the public, and reviewing agencies, for review and comment. The IS/MND is being circulated for public and agency review and comment for a review period of 30 days as indicated on the *Notice of Intent to Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration* (NOI). The 30-day public review period for this project ~~begins~~ began on October 12, 2018 and ~~ends~~ ended on November 13, 2018.

The requirements for providing an NOI are found in CEQA Guidelines §15072. These guidelines require CAL FIRE to notify the general public by utilizing at least one of the following three procedures:

- Publication in a newspaper of general circulation in the area affected by the proposed project,
- Posting the NOI on and off site in the area where the project is to be located, or
- Direct mailing to the owners and occupants of property contiguous to the project.

CAL FIRE has elected to utilize direct mailing to the owners and occupants of property contiguous to the project of the three notification options. The NOI was posted at the El Dorado County Clerk/Recorder's Office at 360 Fair Lane, Placerville, CA 95667.

A complete copy of this CEQA document was made available for review by any member of the public. An electronic version of the NOI and the CEQA document were made available for review for the entire 30-day review period through their posting on CAL FIRE's Internet Web Pages at:

http://www.fire.ca.gov/resource_mgt/resource_mgt_EPRP_PublicNotice.php

If submitted prior to the close of public comment, views and comments are welcomed from reviewing agencies or any member of the public on how the proposed project may affect the environment. Written comments must be postmarked or submitted on or prior to the date the public review period will close (as indicated on the NOI) for CAL FIRE's consideration. Written comments may also be submitted via email (using the email address which appears below) but comments sent via email must also be received on or prior to the close of the 30-day public comment period. Comments shall be addressed to:

Bill Solinsky, RPF 2297
CAL FIRE, Resource Management
P.O. Box 944246
Sacramento, CA 94244-2460
Phone: (916) 657-0300
Email: Bill.Solinisky@fire.ca.gov

After comments are received from the public and reviewing agencies, CAL FIRE will consider those comments and may (1) adopt the Mitigated Negative Declaration and approve the proposed project; (2) undertake additional environmental studies; (3) modify the project or add mitigation to further reduce environmental impacts, or (4) abandon the project.

Project Description and Environmental Setting

The proposed Project is located in a rural portion of El Dorado County on a private parcel that is adjacent to land owned by the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and private property owners, including a neighboring vineyard. The landowner is proposing to convert timberland on the parcel into agricultural production (vineyard to be planted over a 5-year period). The timber on the parcel is experiencing a spreading bark beetle infestation that is causing tree mortality. In order to help curb the spread of this infestation to nearby parcels and clear the land for the vineyard, the landowner is proposing to harvest most of the available timber. Timber Harvest Plan (THP) No. 4-16-004/ELD was prepared and submitted to CAL FIRE for review² on June 3, 2016 and amended and resubmitted on June 23, 2016. THP No. 4-16-004/ELD-2 was submitted for second review to CAL FIRE on August 4, 2016. This Project is consistent with the El Dorado County (County) General Plan, which encourages agricultural development in this area.

Project Location

The proposed Project would take place on a total of 32.5 acres in portions of Section 6, T9N, R13E, and portions of Section 7, T9N, R13E, Mt. Diablo Baseline & Meridian. The Project area (Figure 1) is located within El Dorado County approximately 5.5 miles east of Somerset, CA at its closest point. The site is within the Middle Butte and Butte Creek planning watersheds. The land surrounding the Project area (Figure 2) is small to medium sized privately owned parcels managed as timberland, one parcel of roughly 42 acres that is part of the Eldorado National Forest (ENF), and one parcel that includes an existing vineyard.

Background and Need for the Project

The Project area is currently managed for timber, however, the viable timber production is limited and there has been a recent spread of bark beetle in the area. Initial field observations found roughly a 30% mortality of ponderosa pine in the Project area. Due to these factors and the desire of the landowner to cultivate the property, the Project area is proposed for conversion from timberland to a vineyard.

Project Objectives

1. Harvest available timber as soon as practicable, while retaining some healthy stands of oaks as part of vineyard layout and design. Design a vineyard that considers environmental constraints and maintains local woodland connectivity, while still ensuring productive and cost-effective vineyard operations.
2. Improve existing access roads and water and electrical supply infrastructure, and add an equipment/staging shed to support vineyard operations.
3. Install complete vineyard facilities that fit within the environmental, cultural, and resource constraints of the area.

² Prepared by Jefferson Resources Company June 23, 2016 (Amended Plan)

Project Schedule

Timber harvest is anticipated to begin in Fall 2018, facilities improvement would take place in Winter/Spring 2018/2019, and initial planting would take place in Spring/Summer 2019. Delay of planting may be required to prevent black rot disease. Full planting of the vineyard would take place over five years.

Project Description

The proposed Project would take place in two phases. The first phase would be the timber harvest to clear the Project area and improve access. The second phase would consist of installing the primary infrastructure (e.g., water supply lines, electricity, fencing, and equipment/staging shed) and yearly vineyard plantings. Figure 3 shows the proposed vineyard layout and location of existing and proposed infrastructure.

Phase I

Phase I would primarily consist of timber removal from the Project area. THP NO. 4-16-004-ELD-2 has been submitted to CAL FIRE and outlines the details of operations. Harvesting would take place over an extended period of time including winter, which is defined as November 15 to April 1. A yarding system would be utilized during harvesting operations that includes the use of tractors, end/long lining, rubber tired skidder, and forwarder. Roads and/or landings for heavy equipment would also be constructed during the winter timeframe but no operations are planned to take place within a Watercourse and Lake Protection Zone (WLPZ) designated on the property. The proposed section of new road would be uphill of the WLPZ and all access roads would have an aggregate base. Roads would be laid out to serve as future vineyard access roads.

The proposed THP No. 4-16-004-ELD-2 includes the removal of all trees within the Project area, however, the landowner proposes to retain some healthy oaks within the area and also maintain wildlife habitat connectivity through the property with an approximately 200- to 300-foot wide woodland corridor. Although the property is about 37 acres, a total of between approximately 4 and 5 acres of oak canopy and woodland would be retained, and 26.5 acres harvested for timber. Since the conversion is for agricultural use, the Project would be exempt from standard oak woodland mitigation as per Section 17.73.030 (A) of the County Oak Woodland Management Plan (OWMP).

Slash treatment would consist of piling and burning to dispose of woody, non-merchantable material, including brush areas within 100 feet of the public access County-maintained road (Happy Valley Road) and within 50 feet of a private road (Stephanie Lane).

Phase II

Phase II of the Project would consist of improving existing facilities and infrastructure, constructing the new vineyard equipment/staging shed, and planting of the vineyard over an approximately 5-year period. The primary support system would include water lines that provide irrigation and frost prevention for the vines. To supply the irrigation system, the landowner is proposing to collect rain water from an existing barn roof to fill four (4) 2,500-gallon holding tanks, which would then meet annual water needs for the vineyard, primarily using a gravity feed set-up. An additional 2,500-gallon tank placed on the western edge of the property would increase water supply capacity and be filled annually by pumping water from the primary collection tanks.

Rootstock used will be 110R (Richter) which was developed in Southern France making it very resistant to drought and requiring a fraction of water when compared to rootstock 5C widely used in California. Grape plantings will be Red Rhone varieties, which consume 30% less water than any white grape variety. A Deficit Irrigation Strategy will be used to maximize water productivity and stabilize yields. The result is

expected to be a lower volume but higher quality yield. The water requirement of a mature vineyard over a season varies from 10 to 30 inches per acre in medium to heavy textured soils. The proposed vineyard area is categorized as medium to heavy textured soil and has an average annual rainfall of over 40 inches. This rainfall will be harvested with five 2500-gallon tanks and will expand annually in capacity with another 2500-gallon tank for following five years. The increasing capacity will parallel the expanding vineyard during the five-year incremental planting. Final capacity to collect the rain fall is expected to be 25,000 gallons. In the case of extreme drought, water supply would be supplemented with an existing, on-site well.

To help offset the increased energy demand and costs for vineyard operations, the landowner is also proposing the installation of solar panels near the site of an existing radio antenna installation. These panels would help reduce the impacts on the electric grid by generating renewable energy during peak grid demand periods.

The vineyard would also include fencing to deter wildlife from damaging crops. The fencing (shown in Figure 3) would be installed on each side of Stephanie Lane, along Happy Valley Road, and separate the ENF and adjacent private parcels by following the property line. Final design of the fencing would include wildlife access points that would allow for seasonal movement and foraging through the area. This would also allow wildlife that may become trapped in the vineyard to escape from the area. Special fencing design requirements would also apply to allow emergency vehicle access since the Project area falls within CAL FIRE's State Responsibility Area (SRA).

Operations and maintenance of the vineyard would include periodic irrigation, pest management, and use of equipment for weed abatement, crop harvesting, and transport of the crop. The proposed equipment/staging shed would also serve as a grape harvest storage area, which would be located near the northwest corner of the Project area (Figure 3). Yearly pruning and disposal of agricultural waste would also be part of annual operations.

Environmental Setting of the Project Region

The Project is located at approximately 3,200 feet in elevation within the Sierra Nevada foothills. The forest type is dominated by Sierra-mixed conifer forest and oak woodlands. Nearby land uses include timberland, existing vineyards and orchards, and dispersed USFS parcels. Under CAL FIRE's 2010 Forest and Range Assessment, the Project area has been designated as low to medium priority meaning that some resources are considered at risk but the threat is not high.

Description of the Local Environment

According to the THP prepared by Jefferson Resource Company (THP No. 4-16-004-ELD-2), the Project area is primarily comprised of second growth Sierra-mixed conifer forest. The overstory is dominated by ponderosa pine with a few incense cedar. The understory is comprised mostly of ceanothus, poison oak, and manzanita, although other woody plants are present. California black oak is the most common hardwood species in the Project area with some valley oak³.

Mean annual precipitation averages over 40" per year. The majority of this precipitation occurs as rain between October and May with occasional thundershowers in the summer months. Snowfall does occur in the Project area, usually in mid-winter, January or February.

³ Verified by SEA site visit on February 14, 2017

The Project area occupies land in the east-central part of the northwest-trending belt of metamorphic rocks, which underlies the western slope of the Sierra Nevada. The soils in the Project area are primarily Musick sandy loam with a substantial amount of Hotaw very rocky coarse sandy loam⁴.

The Project area is located within the Butte Creek and Middle Butte Watersheds⁵. The portion of the Project area within the Butte Creek watershed is devoid of watercourses but the portion of the Project area within the Middle Butte watershed contains two class III watercourses that flow in response to precipitation events and may maintain some level of flow for up to several weeks following significant events. The watercourses flow into the North Fork of the Cosumnes River.

Current Land Use and Previous Impacts

Under the County's 2004 General Plan, the land use designation for the parcel is Natural Resource (NR) and under the 2015 Zoning Plan Update, the zoning designation is Rural Lands (RL)⁶-160. The NR designation represents areas that have an economically viable natural resource such as agricultural lands or timberlands. The RL designation represents lands that are suitable for limited residential development and where agriculture is permitted.

Existing development of the property for residential use includes a one story single family dwelling built in 2004 and barn with associated infrastructure. Access to the property is through Stephanie Lane, which is a private road connected to Happy Valley Road. Adjacent parcels are a mixture of developed and undeveloped areas. One adjacent parcel includes a small vineyard (Figure 2) and is designated as Rural Residential (RR) under the 2004 General Plan and Limited Agricultural (LA)-20 under the 2015 Zoning Plan Update.

⁴ Web Soil Survey, 2016

⁵ USGS National Map Viewer 2017

⁶ Parcel data obtained from EDC Planning Department online parcel data information system

<http://edcapps.edcgov.us/Planning/parceldatainfo.asp>. Land use designations are defined in EDC Code 130.21.010 (C) and 2015 General Plan Policy 2.2.1.2.

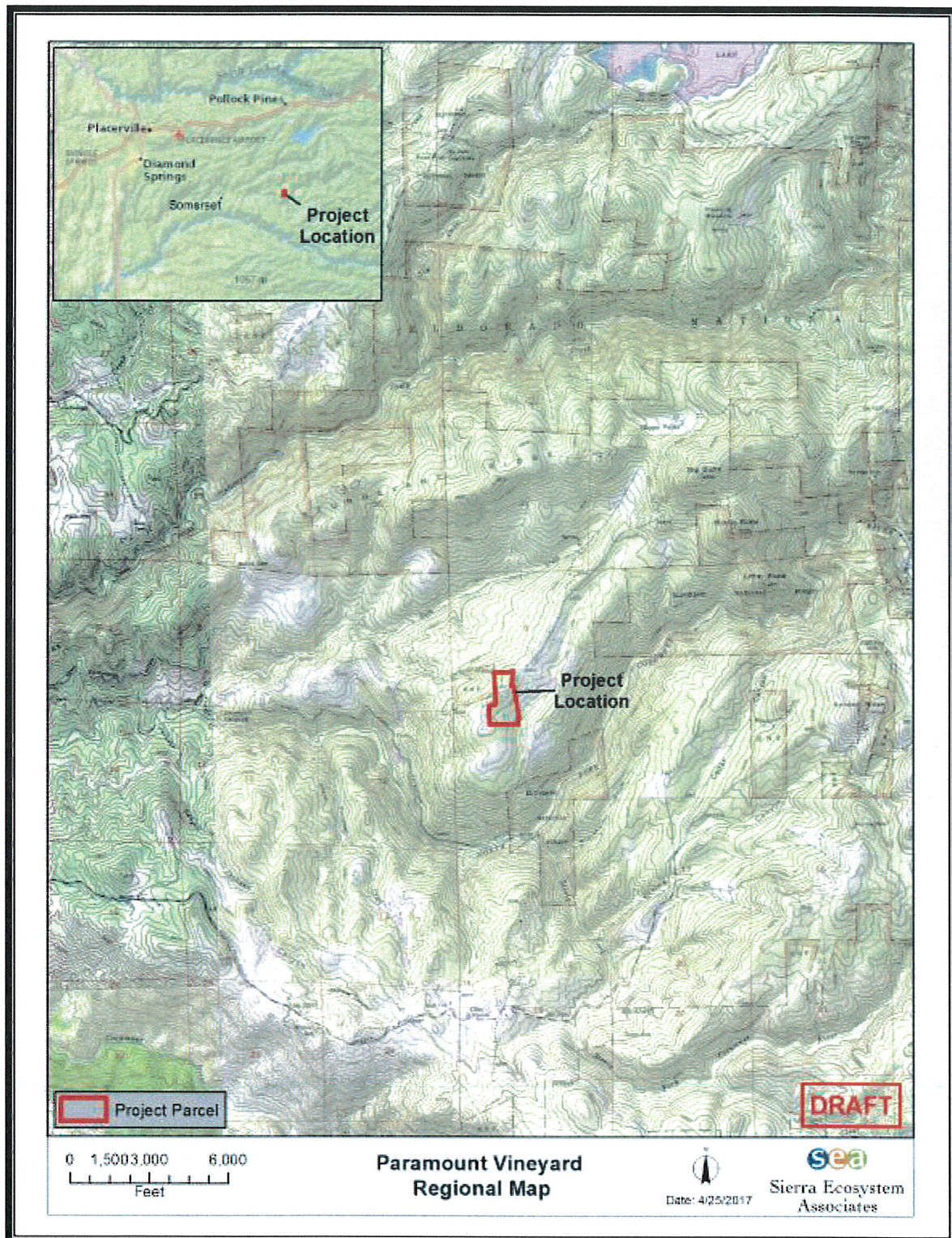


Figure 1. Regional Map.



Figure 2. Project Parcel Map.

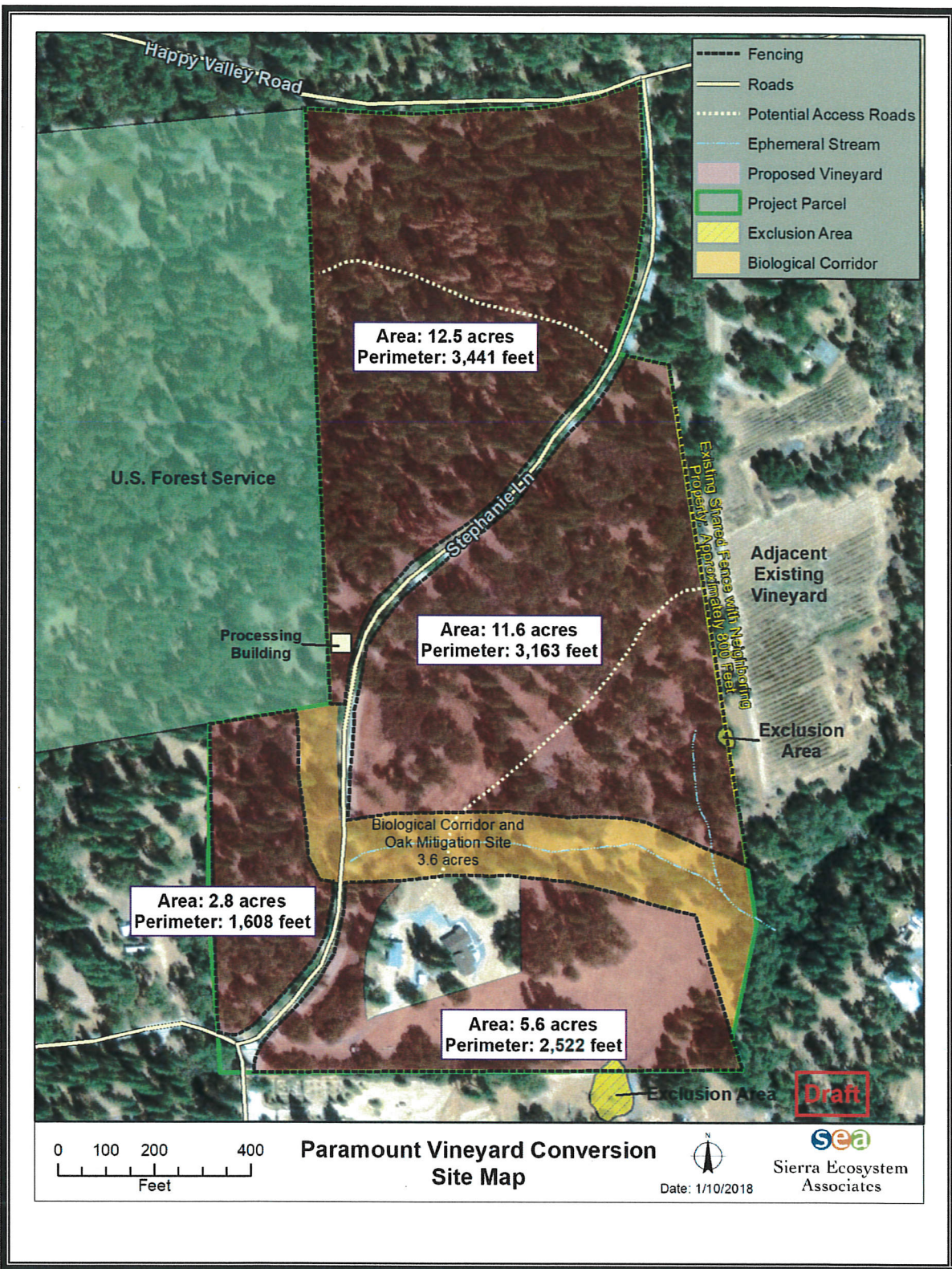


Figure 3. Project Site Map.

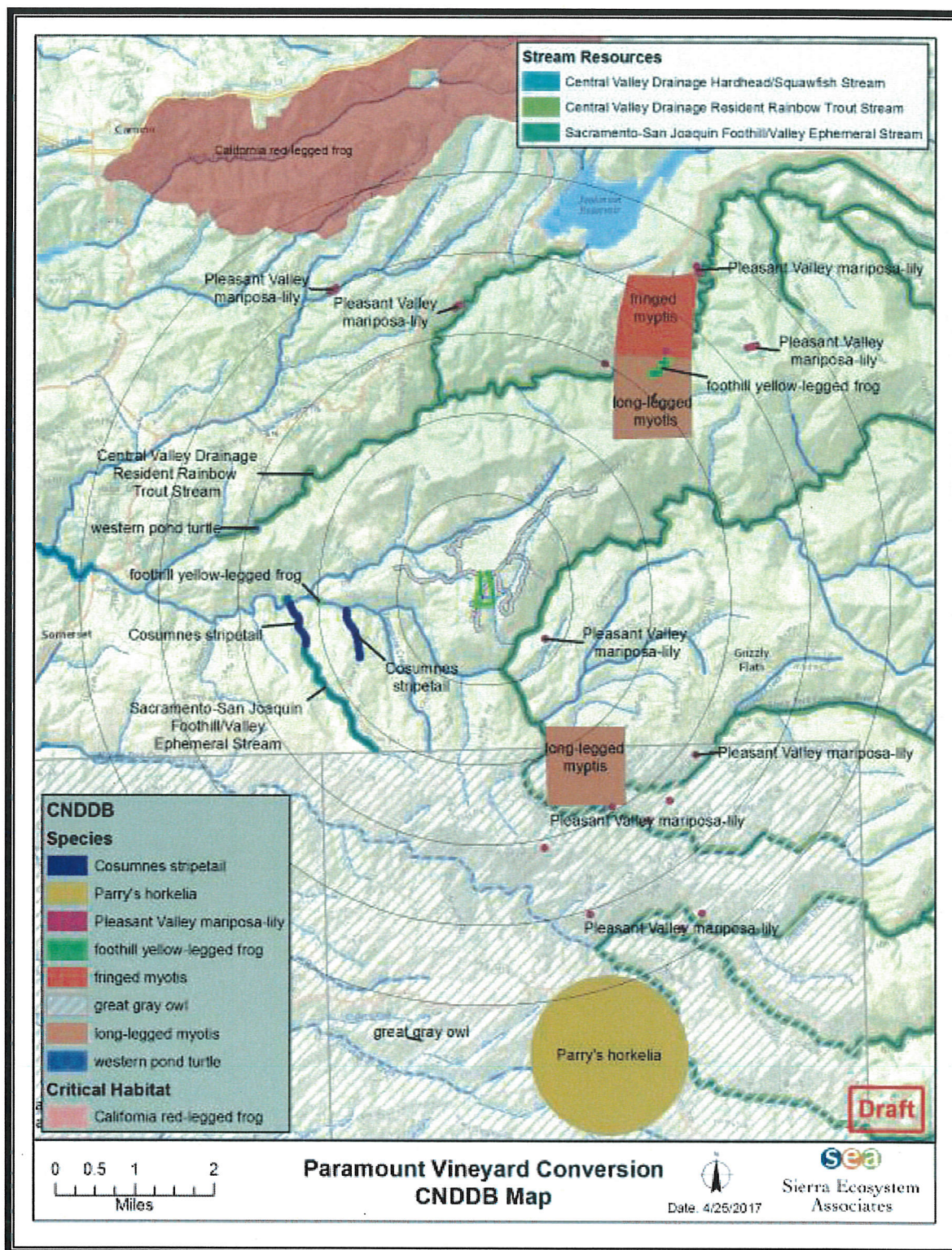


Figure 4. California Natural Diversity Database Map.

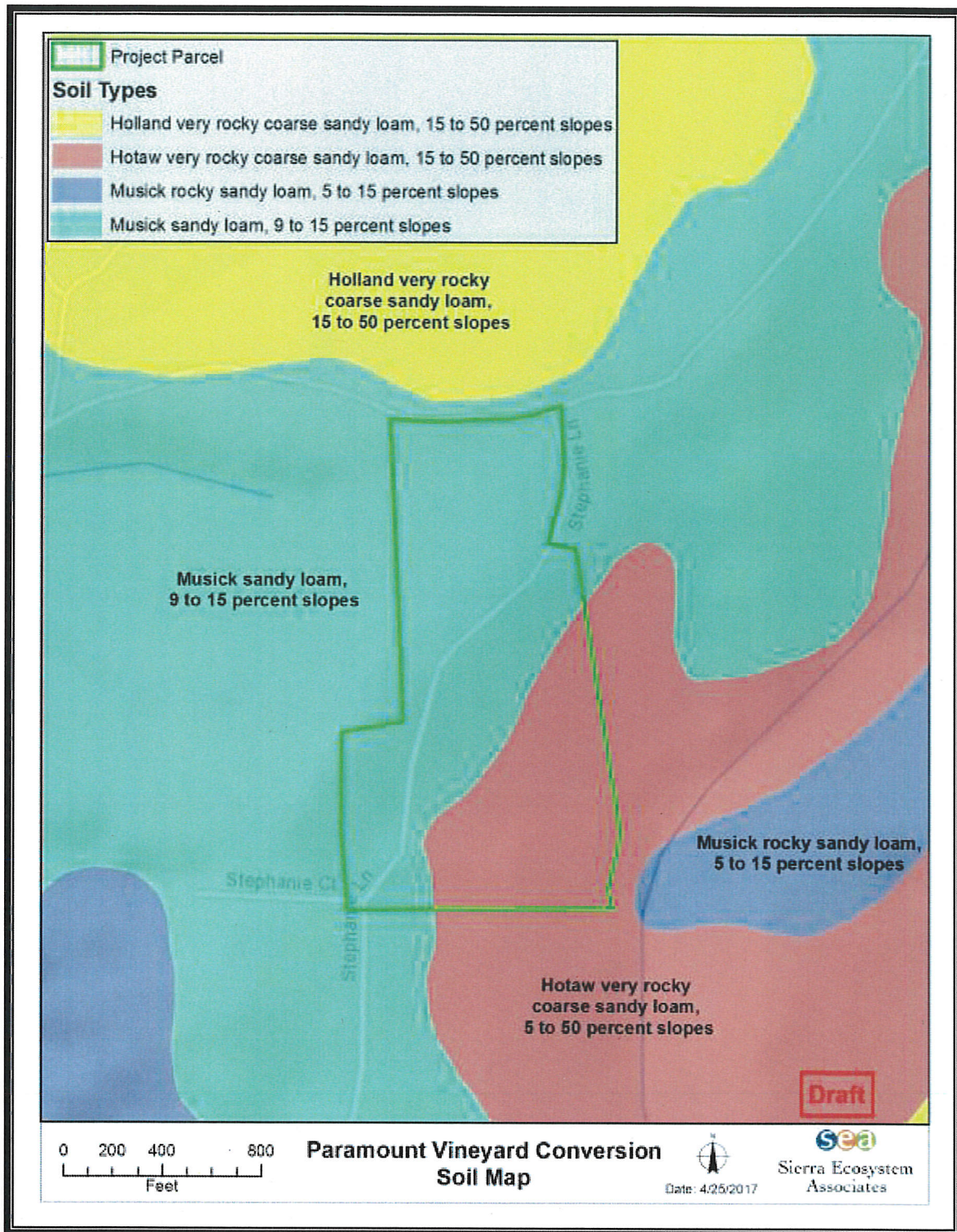


Figure 5. Soil Map.

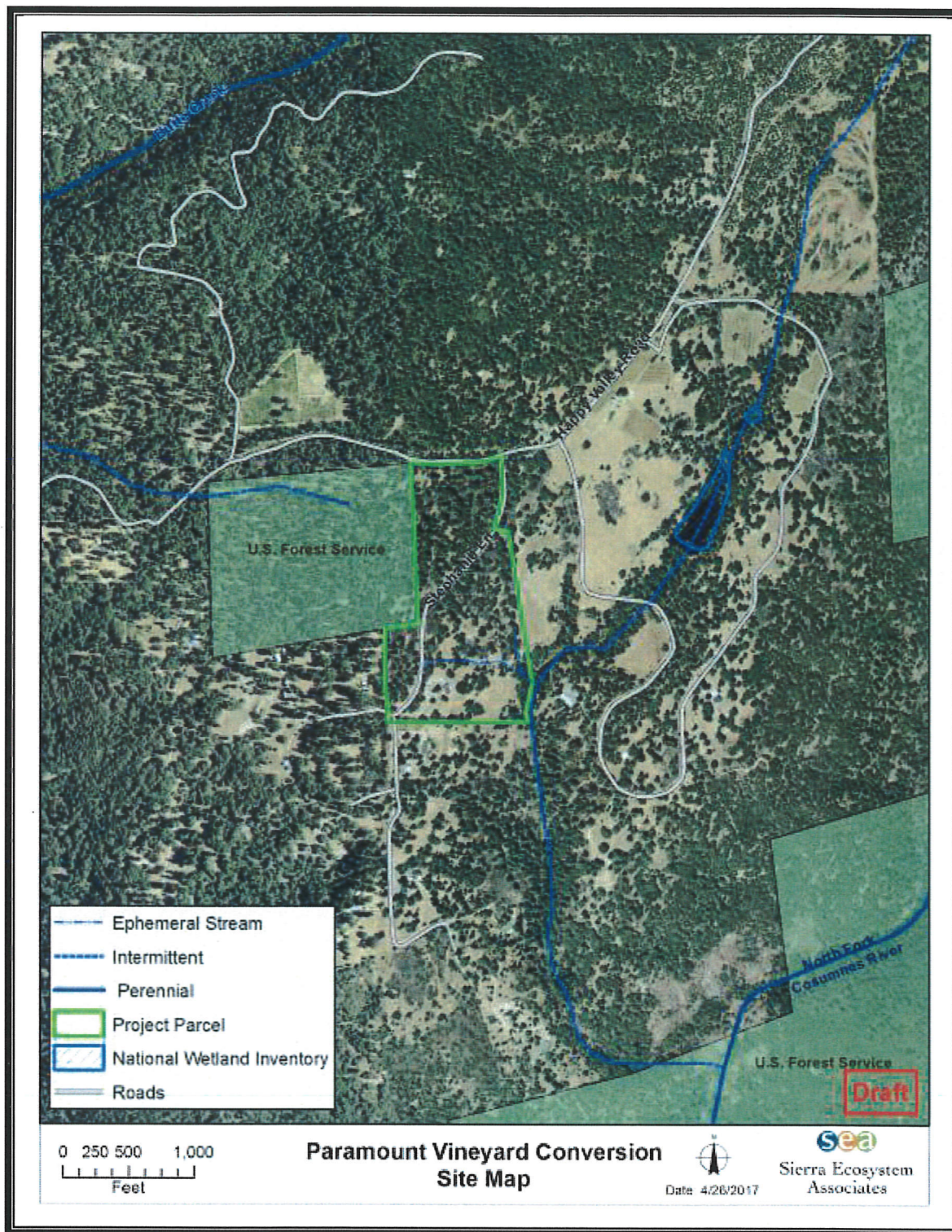


Figure 6. Hydrology Map.

Conclusion of the Mitigated Negative Declaration

Required Permits

The proposed project may require the following environmental permits and CAL FIRE/Project Proponent may be required to comply with the following State regulations:

- Conversion project is exempt from Grading Permit if: “Agricultural grading or other practices, including fuel reduction and fire protection, that do not substantially change the natural contour of the land and that use “best management practices” (BMPs) as recommended by the County Agricultural Commission and adopted by the Board of Supervisors.”
- El Dorado County Agricultural Grading Permit
- El Dorado County Air Quality Management District Burn Permit
- El Dorado County Building Permit (agricultural building and electrical service)

Mitigation Measures

The following twelve (12) mitigation measures will be implemented by CAL FIRE to avoid or minimize environmental impacts. Implementation of these mitigation measures will reduce the environmental impacts of the proposed project to a less than significant level.

Mitigation Measure #1 (AGRI-1): Oak Canopy Retention/Biological Corridor

Implementation of an oak canopy retention area and biological corridor will help minimize impacts to wildlife movement, serve to offset Project GHG emissions, and reduce the loss of forest land due to agricultural conversion as provided below:

- The Project would maintain a biological corridor that would connect forested lands from the east side of the Project area to the adjacent U.S. Forest Service property to the west. The corridor currently contains mostly black oaks (*Quercus kelloggii*) with some valley oaks (*Quercus lobata*). The corridor would be 3.6 acres in size and bisect the Project parcel. The corridor would allow the movement of wildlife and the conservation and promotion of oak woodland habitat.
- Oak woodland in this area would be protected and encouraged by planting acorns collected from oaks existing throughout the property. Acorns would be planted in a naturalistic manner in clusters of 2 to 3 oak seedlings or 4 to 5 acorns every 30 to 40 feet in open areas within the biological corridor.

Mitigation Measure #2 (AIR-1): Fugitive Dust Abatement Program

Implementation of a fugitive dust abatement program during construction will help minimize impacts to the region's non-attainment for PM 2.5 and PM 10 and shall include the following provisions:

- All exposed surfaces (e.g., landings, staging areas, and unpaved access roads) shall be watered as needed to ensure dust abatement.
- Idling times shall be minimized either by shutting vehicles and equipment off when not in use or reducing the maximum idling time to five minutes (as required by the CA airborne toxics control measure Title 13, Section 2485 of the CCR). Clear signage shall be provided for timber harvest workers at all access points.
- All timber harvest equipment shall be maintained and properly tuned in accordance with manufacturer's specifications. All equipment shall be checked by a certified mechanic and determined to be running in proper condition prior to operation.
- Post a publicly visible sign with the telephone number and person to contact at the Lead Agency (CAL FIRE) regarding dust complaints. This person shall respond and take corrective action within

48 hours. The AQMD's phone number shall also be visible to ensure compliance with applicable regulations.

- All heavy-duty timber harvest equipment shall be fitted with diesel particulate matter filters and use only aqueous diesel fuel.

Mitigation Measure #3 (BIO-1): Preconstruction Surveys for Nesting Birds

If construction occurs during the nesting season, February 15 - September 1, preconstruction surveys for nesting birds will be conducted no more than 10 days prior to the start of vegetation/tree removal. The current construction schedule calls for construction to occur outside the nesting season. To mitigate for potential impacts to migratory birds if construction is scheduled to occur during the nesting season, the site would be surveyed by a qualified biologist for active nests. If active nests are located, a 250-foot no-disturbance buffer for non-listed bird species or a 500-foot no-disturbance buffer for migratory bird species will be established. If an active nest exists for any listed species, the location will be recorded and reported to the CDFW to determine any additional mitigation requirements.

Mitigation Measure #4 (BIO-2): Survey for Roosting Bats

An emergence count survey will be conducted the evening before felling structures that are potential roosts such as snags and other trees with exfoliating bark. If sensitive bat species are found within the construction area, logging will be delayed until CDFW is consulted and potential significant impacts can be mitigated. Logging as late in the day as practical would aid in reducing significant impacts.

Mitigation Measure #5 (CUL-1): Pre-Timber Operations Meeting

A pre-timber removal environmental briefing meeting between a Registered Professional Forester (RPF) or supervised designee familiar with on-site conditions and the hired Licensed Timber Operator (LTO) will be conducted prior to start of timber operations to discuss timber operations avoidance areas, including archaeological resource sites, buffer areas, biological corridor retention areas, and contractual obligations to stop work if new sites or evidence of possible human remains are uncovered during vegetation removal.

Mitigation Measure #6 (CUL-2): Ground Disturbance Monitoring

No timber operations or construction shall occur within the Exclusion Areas (Figure 3), and within the 100-foot buffer, timber shall be felled away from the Exclusion Areas. No equipment shall enter into or operate within the Exclusion Area.

Mitigation Measure #7 (CUL-3): Accidental Discovery

In compliance with the California Health and Safety Code, Section 7050.5(b), if human remains are discovered, excavation will halt in the immediate area and the County Coroner, along with CAL FIRE, will be notified. Within 48 hours of notification, the Coroner will determine whether the remains are of Native American descent. If so, the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) will be notified within 24 hours, and as required under PRC, Section 5097.98, the most likely descendants will be notified. Based on the above notifications, measures will be implemented that address the removal and relocation of the remains.

Mitigation Measure #8 (GHG-1): Oak Woodland Preservation

Preserve oak woodland corridor and plant oak seedlings on 3.6 acres. The oak seedlings will help offset the reduced GHG sequestration associated with the timber removal by an estimated 36.3 MT CO₂. See the Agricultural Resources Section – Mitigation AGRI-1 for further details. Additionally, healthy oaks would be preserved that are near the existing home and that are within the biological corridor.

Mitigation Measure #9 (GHG-2): Offset Increased Energy Use

The landowner will install solar panels to offset the increased energy use of vineyard operations. If the landowner installs a 25kW PV array, it will offset approximately 25.6 tons of CO₂ per year. These panels will help reduce the need for increased electricity use by providing renewable onsite energy.

Mitigation Measure #10 (HAZ-1): Transportation of Hazardous Materials

Personnel transporting and handling hazardous materials will follow California Department of Toxic Substances Control (CCR Title 22, Division 4.5, Chapter 13) and Cal/OSHA (CFR Title 29) standards for safe handling and delivery.

Mitigation Measure #11 (HYD-1): Erosion Control Plan

In order to reduce excess surface water runoff and sedimentation, an Erosion Control Plan will be developed as part of the SWPPP for the Project (see also Geology and Soils, Section VI.b). The SWPPP shall include BMPs and other measures as recommended by the County Agricultural Commission to protect water quality in the area and in downstream water courses.

Mitigation Measure #12 (NOISE-1): Construction Noise Reduction

According to El Dorado County guidelines, construction and timber harvest activities will take place between the hours of 7AM – 7PM (EDC 2017). In addition, all equipment will be inspected to ensure that factory installed mufflers are in place before clearing and timber harvest activities commence.

Summary of Findings

This IS/MND has been prepared to assess the project's potential effects on the environment and an appraisal of the significance of those effects. Based on this IS/MND, it has been determined that the proposed project will not have any significant effects on the environment after implementation of mitigation measures. This conclusion is supported by the following findings:

1. The proposed project will have no effect related to, Land Use and Planning, Mineral Resources, Population and Housing, Public Services, and Recreation.
2. The proposed project will have a less than significant impact on Aesthetics, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Transportation/Traffic, and Utilities and Service Systems.
3. Mitigation is required to reduce potentially significant impacts related to Agriculture and Forest Resources, Air Quality, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Geology and Soils, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Hydrology and Water Quality, and Noise.

The IS/Environmental Checklist included in this document discusses the results of resource-specific environmental impact analyses which were conducted by the Department. This IS revealed that potentially significant environmental effects could result from the proposed project; however, the proponent revised its project plans and has developed mitigation measures which will eliminate impacts or reduce environmental impacts to a less than significant level. CAL FIRE has found, in consideration of the entire record, that there is no substantial evidence that the proposed project as currently revised and mitigated would result in a significant effect upon the environment. The IS/MND is therefore the appropriate document for CEQA compliance.

INITIAL STUDY/ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

PROJECT INFORMATION			
1. Project Title:	Paramount Timberland to Vineyard Conversion Project		
2. Lead Agency Name and Address:	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection P.O. 944246 Sacramento, CA 94244-2460		
3. Project Proponent and Phone Number:	Zoran and Katie Borisavljevic (530) 503-5950		
4. Project Location:	7707 Stephanie Lane, Somerset, CA, El Dorado County		
5. CAL FIRE Representative Name, Address, and Phone Number:	Dan Stapleton P.O. 944246 Sacramento, CA 94244-2460 (916) 651-2899 Bill Solinsky P.O. Box 944246 Sacramento, CA 94244-2460 (916) 657-0300		
6. General Plan Designation:	Natural Resource		
7. Zoning:	Rural Lands (RL-160)		
8. Description of Project: See Pages 6-9 of this document			
9. Surrounding Land Uses and Setting:	Refer to pages 8-9 of this document		
10: Other public agencies whose approval may be required:	See pages 49 - 52 of this document		
ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED:			
<p>The environmental factors checked below are the ones which would potentially be affected by this proposed project and were more rigorously analyzed than the factors which were not checked. The results of this analysis are presented in the detailed Environmental Checklist which follows:</p>			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Aesthetics	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Agriculture and Forestry Resources
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Biological Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Cultural Resources
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Greenhouse Gas Emissions	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Hazards & Hazardous Materials
<input type="checkbox"/>	Land Use / Planning	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mineral Resources
<input type="checkbox"/>	Population / Housing	<input type="checkbox"/>	Public Services
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Transportation / Traffic	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Utilities / Service Systems
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Air Quality
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Geology / Soils
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Hydrology / Water Quality
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Noise
<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	Recreation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Mandatory Findings of Significance

DETERMINATION

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

I find that the proposed project **COULD NOT** have a significant effect on the environment, and a **NEGATIVE DECLARATION** will be prepared. ☐

I find that although the proposed project **COULD** have a significant effect on the environment, there **WILL NOT** be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A **MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION** will be prepared. ☒

I find that the proposed project **MAY** have a significant effect on the environment, and an **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT** is required. ☐

I find that the proposed project **MAY** have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT** is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed. ☐

I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier **EIR** or **NEGATIVE DECLARATION** pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier **EIR** or **NEGATIVE DECLARATION**, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required. ☐

October, 12, 2018

Date Signed

Bill Solinsky, RPF #2297
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ANALYSIS OF POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
I. Aesthetics. Will the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which will adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

The Project area is located approximately 5.5 miles east of Somerset, CA on a rural residential parcel that is split by a privately maintained road. The land surrounding the Project area is small to medium sized parcels of timberland, one parcel of roughly 45 acres, which is part of the ENF, and one parcel that includes an existing vineyard.

a) Will the project have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?

Less Than Significant Impact. The Project proposes agricultural cultivation of a mixed conifer and oak woodland area. There is limited line of site from the main road. A private road used by approximately seven homeowners transects the proposed Project area. Initial tree removal and grading of land would temporarily reduce the quality of the scenic vista until the vineyard planting is complete.

b) Will the project substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?

No Impact. There is no designated scenic road or highway in the Project area. Furthermore, there are no rock outcroppings or historic buildings on site to be affected by Project activities. The proposed Project does require trees larger than 6 inches Diameter at Breast Height (DBH) be removed and be replaced with a vineyard. While agricultural cultivation is exempt from oak woodland mitigation measures, the proposed Project includes maintaining a biological corridor in the Project area to sustain wildlife movement and planting of oak seedlings in an area outside of the proposed 37 acres (Mitigation Measure AGRI-1: Oak Canopy Retention/Biological Corridor from the Agriculture and Forest Resources; 7.4.2.9. El Dorado County General Plan: Conservation and Open Space Element).

c) Will the project substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?

Less Than Significant Impact. Visual character of the site will be temporarily reduced as timber from the Project area is removed. However, there is roughly a 30% mortality rate of ponderosa pine within the project site and removal of dead pines will actually prevent the spread of pine bark beetle into the neighboring forest which would potentially further degrade the visual character. Improvement of current facilities and

infrastructure in the Project area will occur following grading as well as grading and the planting of a vineyard.

d) Will the project create a new source of substantial light or glare which will adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?

Less Than Significant Impact. The proposed Project will not include the addition of street lamps or other sources of nighttime lighting. The proposed Project does include building structures with potential reflective surfaces, including the addition of solar panels, which could potentially cause glare during the daytime. Proposed placement of these reflective structures would limit increases in glare to surrounding properties near the Project area.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
II. Agriculture and Forest Resources.				
In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997, as updated) prepared by the California Department of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. Would the project:				
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code §12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code §4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code §51104(g))?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Involve other changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

a) Would the project convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?

No Impact. The Project would be located on land mapped as Grazing and Farmland of Local Importance Land by the California Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) (CDC 2016). There are areas of Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance located in the proposed Project area. Project activities would be consistent with current Farmland designations.

Land of importance to the local agricultural economy as determined by each county's board of supervisors and a local advisory committee. Lands that do not qualify for the Prime, Statewide, or Unique designation but are considered Existing Agricultural Lands, or Potential Agricultural Lands, in the Agricultural Land Element of the County General Plan. Timberlands are excluded.

Grazing Land is land on which the existing vegetation is suited to the grazing of livestock. This category was developed in cooperation with the California Cattlemen's Association, University of California Cooperative Extension, and other groups interested in the extent of grazing activities.

b) Would the project conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract?

No Impact. The Project would not conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract. The parcel is designated as Agricultural Exclusive by the County General Plan. Project activities would not violate this designation (EDC 2004).

c) Would the project conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code §12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code §4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code §51104(g))

No Impact. The land use zoning at the site would not change as a result of the Project and the Project would be consistent with the existing zoning for agricultural use.

d) Would the project result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. The Project would result in the loss of forest land as defined by PRC, Section 12220(g), which states that:

Forest land is land that can support 10-percent native tree cover of any species, including hardwoods, under natural conditions, and that allows for management of one or more forest resources, including timber, aesthetics, fish and wildlife, biodiversity, water quality, recreation, and other public benefits.

The pine and oak woodland habitat at the Project site supports at least 10% canopy cover by yellow pines and native oaks (primarily *Pinus ponderosa* and *Quercus kelloggii*). Project activities would remove Forest land and be replaced by agricultural use. The oak population is mostly large decadent black oaks prone to structural failure. The ponderosa pines within the proposed Project contain a large infestation of pine bark beetles. Approximately 25% of existing ponderosa pine in the parcel has succumbed to mortality. Pitch tubes from bark beetles, dieback, and flagging (symptoms of bark beetle infestation) have been recorded in a large area surrounding the existing beetle spots. Tree mortality is expected to continue to spread throughout the property and onto the adjacent USFS property.

County Zoning Ordinance 17.73.030 includes the exemption of Agricultural Cultivation –The removal of native vegetation, including oaks, for the purposes of producing or processing plant and animal products or the preparation of land for this purpose (EDC 2004).

Mitigation Measure AGRI-1 would offset the conversion of forest land to agriculture, reducing impacts to a less-than-significant level.

e) Would the project involve other changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

No Impact. The Project would not cause other changes that could result in the conversion of farmland or forest land to other uses.

Mitigation Measure #1 (AGRI-1): Oak Canopy Retention/Biological Corridor

Implementation of an oak canopy retention area and biological corridor will help minimize impacts to wildlife movement, serve to offset Project GHG emissions, and reduce the loss of forest land due to agricultural conversion as provided below:

- The Project would maintain a biological corridor that would connect forested lands from the east side of the Project area to the adjacent U.S. Forest Service property to the west. The corridor currently contains mostly black oaks (*Quercus kelloggii*) with some valley oaks (*Quercus lobata*). The corridor would be 3.6 acres in size and bisect the Project parcel. The corridor would allow the movement of wildlife and the conservation and promotion of oak woodland habitat.
- Oak woodland in this area would be protected and encouraged by planting acorns collected from oaks existing throughout the property. Acorns would be planted in a naturalistic manner in clusters of 2 to 3 oak seedlings or 4 to 5 acorns every 30 to 40 feet in open areas within the biological corridor.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
III. Air Quality.				
Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied on to make the following determinations. Will the project:				
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

The Project area is considered part of the Sacramento Air Quality Management Region, which is currently in non-attainment for Ozone, particulate matter (PM) 2.5, and PM 10 (EDC 2017).

a) Will the project conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. Construction activities, such as timber harvest, land clearing, movement of vehicles, fugitive dust from exposed soil, and operations and maintenance associated with implementation of the proposed Project would have the potential to violate the ambient air quality standards or may contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation. This is a potentially significant impact. However, with implementation of Mitigation Measure AIR-1 below, the impact will be reduced to less than significant.

b) Will the project violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?

No Impact. The Project is not anticipated to violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation.

c) Will the project result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. The Project will include the temporary use of heavy diesel equipment and logging trucks to harvest the conversion area and haul off timber. In addition, the Project will be burning slash piles created from timber harvest operations. For this, a burn permit will be obtained from the County Air Quality Management District (AQMD). These activities will have a temporary localized impact on air quality including PM 2.5 and PM 10. However, the impact will be short-term, not have long lasting, region wide effects and will be mitigated using Mitigation Measure AIR-1 below.

d) Will the project expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?

No Impact. The Project area is not in the vicinity of a sensitive receptor site such as a school or park area.

e) Will the project create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?

No Impact. The Project is not anticipated to create objectionable odors.

Mitigation Measure #2 (AIR-1): Fugitive Dust Abatement Program

Implementation of a fugitive dust abatement program during construction will help minimize impacts to the region's non-attainment for PM 2.5 and PM 10 and shall include the following provisions:

- All exposed surfaces (e.g., landings, staging areas, and unpaved access roads) shall be watered as needed to ensure dust abatement.
- Idling times shall be minimized either by shutting vehicles and equipment off when not in use or reducing the maximum idling time to five minutes (as required by the CA airborne toxics control measure Title 13, Section 2485 of the CCR). Clear signage shall be provided for timber harvest workers at all access points.

- All timber harvest equipment shall be maintained and properly tuned in accordance with manufacturer's specifications. All equipment shall be checked by a certified mechanic and determined to be running in proper condition prior to operation.
- Post a publicly visible sign with the telephone number and person to contact at the Lead Agency (CAL FIRE) regarding dust complaints. This person shall respond and take corrective action within 48 hours. The AQMD's phone number shall also be visible to ensure compliance with applicable regulations.
- All heavy-duty timber harvest equipment shall be fitted with diesel particulate matter filters and use only aqueous diesel fuel.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
IV. Biological Resources. Will the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

The Project area is located within a 42-acre parcel 6 miles east of Somerset, CA on a ridge above and north of the North Fork Cosumnes River. The Project is located at approximately 3200 feet elevation. The overstory consists mostly of ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*) with large groups of large diameter decadent black oak (*Quercus kelloggii*) and a few incense cedars (*Calocedrus decurrens*). The understory is a mix of nonnative grasses with dense groupings of manzanita (*Arctostaphylos viscida*) and buck brush (*Ceanothus cuneatus*). A pine bark beetle infestation is spreading through the dense ponderosa pine stand in the northern part of the Project area. The ponderosa pines have experienced approximately 30% mortality.

The Project area is situated along a ridge nose with no major stream courses or wetlands. The surrounding area is mostly mixed oak-pine forest, agricultural areas (vineyards), and residential housing.

a) Would the project have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. Table 1, below, summarizes the results of queries (all occurrences within five miles of the proposed Project) of the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Database (USFWS 2017) for the area covered by the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), Sly Park, Aukum, Camino, and Omo Ranch topographic quadrangles (Figure 4). A review of the CNDDB indicates the presence of several Federally Threatened and Endangered plants and animals (CDFW 2017) in the broader region. Based on a field reconnaissance survey of the habitat on-site and data from the above searches it was determined that several special-status species may have habitat near the proposed Project. The species habitat descriptions, descriptions of on-site conditions, and explanations of potential effects on each species are presented below.

Native migratory birds are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) regardless of their sensitivity status. Removal of vegetation during construction, if vegetation removal were to occur during the nesting/breeding season (generally defined as February 15 to September 15) may disturb species protected by the MBTA, as well as any nesting non-migratory birds. This would result in a significant impact to nesting birds under the protection. Implementation of mitigation measure MM-BIO-1 would reduce the effect of proposed activities on migratory birds to Less Than Significant.

Table 1. Special Status Species

Common Name	Scientific Name	Federal Listing	California Listing	CNPS Listing	Potential Habitat
Birds					
bank swallow	<i>Riparia riparia</i>	None	Threatened		No
great gray owl	<i>Strix nebulosa</i>	None	Endangered		Yes
northern goshawk	<i>Accipiter gentilis</i>	None	None		Yes
Invertebrates					
Cosumnes stripetail	<i>Cosumnoperla hypocrena</i>	None	None		No
Amphibians, Reptiles					
California red-legged frog	<i>Rana draytonii</i>	Threatened	None		No
foothill yellow-legged frog	<i>Rana boylei</i>	None	None		No
Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog	<i>Rana sierrae</i>	Endangered	Threatened		No
western pond turtle	<i>Emys marmorata</i>	None	None		No
Mammals					
fringed myotis	<i>Myotis thysanodes</i>	None	None		Yes
Long-legged myotis	<i>Myotis volans</i>	None	None		Yes
fisher - West Coast DPS	<i>Pekania pennant</i>	Proposed Threatened	Candidate Threatened		Yes
silver-haired bat	<i>Lasionycteris noctivagans</i>	None	None		Yes
Plants					
Brandegee's clarkia	<i>Clarkia biloba ssp. brandegeae</i>	None	None	4.2	No
Parry's horkelia	<i>Horkelia parryi</i>	None	None	1B.2	No
Pleasant Valley mariposa-lily	<i>Calochortus clavatus var. avius</i>	None	None	1B.2	No

Red Hills soaproot	<i>Chlorogalum grandiflorum</i>	None	None	1B.2	No
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Bank swallow (*Riparia riparia*)

The bank swallow is a state-listed Threatened species. This colonial species nests along steep vertical banks, cliffs, or bluffs along perennial waters. The bank soil must be soft enough for burrowing (Zeiner 1990). There are no areas within the Project that could provide suitable habitat for this species. There are no incised, eroded banks in the Project area. Adverse impacts to this species are not likely.

Great gray owl (*Strix nebulosa*)

The great gray owl is a state listed endangered species. Its habitat consists of dense conifer and mixed oak forests, adjacent meadows, bogs. Generally favors dense forest for nesting and roosting, and open areas for hunting. The majority of the Project area is open and unlikely to favor nesting. Mitigation Measure BIO-1 would prevent harm to possible nesting owls in the Project area.

Northern goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis*)

Northern goshawks breed in most forested plant communities available throughout their range, including coniferous, deciduous, and mixed forest types. In addition to forested areas, they may also use shrublands and open areas while foraging, migrating, or overwintering.

Northern goshawk pairs occupy nesting areas from February to early April. Northern goshawks appear to prefer relatively dense forests with large trees and relatively high canopy closures. Potential nesting area exists within the general Project area (Stone 2013). Mitigation Measure BIO-1 would prevent harm to possible nesting goshawks in the Project area.

Cosumnes stripetail (*Cosumnoperla hypocrena*)

This stonefly prefers shady intermittent streams on the western slope of central Sierra Nevada foothills in American and Cosumnes river drainages. There are no intermittent streams within the Project area. Small ephemeral streams located on the site are in full sun and provide poor habitat.

California red-legged frog (*Rana draytonii*)

The California red-legged frog requires a variety of habitat elements with aquatic breeding areas embedded within a matrix of riparian and upland dispersal habitats. Breeding sites of the California red-legged frog are in aquatic habitats including pools and backwaters within streams and creeks, ponds, marshes, springs, sag ponds, dune ponds and lagoons. Additionally, California red-legged frogs (CRLF) frequently breed in artificial impoundments such as stock ponds. No habitat or designated critical habitat exist within the Project area.

Foothill yellow-legged frog (*Rana boylei*)

Prefer partially shaded, small perennial streams with at least some cobble-sized rocks, riffle areas and a stream depth rarely greater than 1 meter. There are no perennial streams within the Project. Habitat for this species does not exist within the Project.

Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog (*Rana sierrae*)

Inhabits lakes, ponds, meadow streams, isolated pools, and sunny riverbanks in the Sierra Nevada Mountains. Open stream and lake edges with a gentle slope up to a depth of 5-8 cm. seem to be preferred. The Project does not contain habitat for this species.

Western pond turtle (*Emys marmorata*)

This species prefers aquatic habitats with exposed areas for basking, with aquatic vegetation, such as algae and other water plants, but they also live in clear waters, especially where there is cover such as boulders or fallen trees in the water. The Project does not contain habitat for this species.

Fringed myotis (*Myotis thysanodes*)

The fringed bat occurs in a variety of habitats from desert-scrub to fir-pine associations. Oak and pinyon woodlands appear to be the most commonly used vegetative associations. Roost sites may be in caves, mines, and buildings, snags, stumps, boulder fields, & rock outcrops. The Project contains roosting habitat for this species. Mitigation measure MM-BIO-2 would reduce effects to a less than significant level.

Long-legged myotis (*Myotis volans*)

The long-legged bat can establish roosts in trees, rock crevices, fissures in stream banks, and buildings. Ponderosa pine snags with exfoliating bark are potential roosting sites. The Project contains roosting habitat for this species. Mitigation measure MM-BIO-2 would reduce effects to a less than significant level.

Fisher - West Coast DPS (*Pekania pennant*)

Fishers prefer forest habitats with dense canopy closure, large diameter live trees (conifers and hardwoods) and snags (dead trees) with cavities and other deformities, large diameter down wood, multiple canopy layers. Mature and Late-successional coniferous or mixed forests that contain key habitat and structural components provide the most suitable fisher habitat because they provide abundant potential den sites and preferred prey species. Moderate habitat is present within the Project area, although the species is unlikely to be present.

Silver-haired bat (*Lasionycteris noctivagans*)

Silver-haired bats prefer temperate, northern hardwoods with ponds or streams nearby. The typical day roost for the bat is behind loose tree bark or in foliage. Hollow snags also provide daytime roosting sites for silver-haired bats. Less common daytime roosts include buildings, such as open sheds and garages. During the winter months, silver-haired bats that hibernate find shelter in northern areas inside trees, buildings, rock crevices, and similar protected structures. Moderate habitat is present within the Project area, although the species may be present. Mitigation measure MM-BIO-2 would reduce effects to a less than significant level.

Brandegee's clarkia (*Clarkia biloba* ssp. *Brandegeeae*)

Grows in foothill woodland areas up to 2,000 feet in elevation. Often inhabits road cuts and the base of steep rocky slopes. Potential habitat is not present.

Parry's Horkelia (*Horkelia parryi*)

This plant grows in chaparral and on loess formation soils between 250 and 3,000 feet in elevation. The Project does not contain habitat for this species.

Pleasant Valley mariposa-lily (*Calochortus clavatus* var. *avius*)

This species grows in Lower montane coniferous forest with Josephine silt loam and volcanic soils between 3,000 to 6,000 feet elevation. No Josephine or volcanic soils exist within the Project. Habitat for this plant is poor.

Red Hills soaproot (*Chlorogalum grandiflorum*)

This species grows in serpentine outcrops, open shrubby or wooded hills between 1,000 and 1,500 feet in elevation. No serpentine soils exist within the Project area. The Project area does not contain habitat for this species.

b) Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

Less than Significant with Mitigation. Oak woodlands are protected under the County General Plan. The proposed Project would be exempt from restrictions on removal of oak canopy based on County Zoning Ordinance 17.73.030 which includes the exemption of Agricultural Cultivation –The removal of native vegetation, including oaks, for the purposes of producing or processing plant and animal products or the preparation of land for this purpose (EDC 2004). The proposed Project would retain approximately 3.5 acres of oak canopy consisting mostly of black oak (*Quercus kelloggii*). Mitigation Measure AGRI-1 would offset the removal of oak canopy.

The proposed Project would not have a substantial adverse effect on any other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) or USFWS.

There is no riparian habitat within the Project area. The ephemeral drainages within the Project area have small watersheds and only have overland flow during heavy rain events. No riparian or wetland vegetation exists within or near these ephemeral drainages or in the proposed Project area. With the implementation of Mitigation Measure HYDR-1 (see Hydrology and Water Quality section), Project activities would not adversely affect downstream riparian habitat.

c) Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?

Less than Significant with Mitigation. There are no wetlands within the proposed Project area. The soils within the area of potential disturbance are not conducive to the formation of vernal pools, nor is the topography suitable (too much slope). Project activities would not impact any federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA) (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means. Project activities would not adversely affect adjacent (downstream) wetlands with the implementation of Mitigation Measure HYDR-1 (see Hydrology and Water Quality section below).

d) Would the project interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?

Less than Significant with Mitigation. The Project would create fencing around the proposed vineyard to protect it from grazing animals. Fencing would restrict wildlife movement through the vineyard. As noted in Mitigation Measure AGRI-1, the Project would create a biological corridor that would allow the movement of wildlife through the property.

The Project would not create any barriers across water courses. Project activities would not interfere with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish.

e) Would the project conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?

No Impact. Project activities would not conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance.

f) Would the project conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?

No Impact. There are no approved conservation plans that cover the area of the Project location.

Mitigation Measure #3 (BIO-1): Preconstruction Surveys for Nesting Birds

If construction occurs during the nesting season, February 15 - September 1, preconstruction surveys for nesting birds will be conducted no more than 10 days prior to the start of vegetation/tree removal. The current construction schedule calls for construction to occur outside the nesting season. To mitigate for potential impacts to migratory birds if construction is scheduled to occur during the nesting season, the site would be surveyed by a qualified biologist for active nests. If active nests are located, a 250-foot no-disturbance buffer for non-listed bird species or a 500-foot no-disturbance buffer for migratory bird species will be established. If an active nest exists for any listed species, the location will be recorded and reported to the CDFW to determine any additional mitigation requirements.

Mitigation Measure #4 (BIO-2): Survey for Roosting Bats

An emergence count survey will be conducted the evening before felling structures that are potential roosts such as snags and other trees with exfoliating bark. If sensitive bat species are found within the construction area, logging will be delayed until CDFW is consulted and potential significant impacts can be mitigated. Logging as late in the day as practical would aid in reducing significant impacts.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
V. Cultural Resources. Will the project:				
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in Section 15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

North Central Information Center (NCIC) conducted a records search by examining California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS) maps for cultural resource records and survey reports in El Dorado County. The records search included the Project area plus a one-sixteenth-mile radius. According to NCIC, approximately 5% of the search area has been previously surveyed for cultural resources and that the search area contains zero recorded historic and prehistoric-period cultural resources listed within the CHRIS.

NCIC summarized its record search results in a letter to Jefferson Resource Company dated April 19, 2016. In the letter, NCIC explains that, in this part of El Dorado County, archaeologists locate prehistoric habitation sites adjacent to streams or on ridges or knolls, especially those with southern exposure. Furthermore, “this region is known as the ethnographic-period territory of the Nisenan, also called the Southern Maidu. The Nisenan maintained permanent settlements along major rivers in the Sacramento Valley and foothills, and periodically traveled to higher elevations to hunt or gather plants” (NCIC 2016). Given the extent of known cultural resources and the environmental setting, NCIC determined that there is low potential for historic and pre-historic cultural resources within the proposed Project area.

Jefferson Resource Company prepared an Archaeology Survey Report (dated June 18, 2016), based on a reconnaissance survey conducted for the THP on March 17, 2016 and March 24, 2016. As part of its report, Jefferson Resource Company sent letters to six tribal organizations on April 29, 2016 regarding the Project and requested any known or suspected information about Native American archaeological or cultural resources that may exist within the Project area. A second request for information from the tribal organizations was distributed on June 17, 2016. At the time the Archaeology Survey Report was complete, only one of the six tribal organizations had responded to requests for information but did not indicate knowledge of any known cultural resources on the site.

As part of the archaeology survey conducted in 2016, three archaeological (pre-historic) resources were identified and recorded within the Project area; therefore, a buffer of 100 feet will be established for two Exclusion Areas to avoid and preserve the identified resources. The Archaeology Survey Report has been filed with CHRIS and impacts will be avoided during vineyard conversion, operations, and maintenance. No historic resources were identified during the archaeology survey of the Project area.

a) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in Section 15064.5?

No Impact. There is no known scientifically recognized event or person associated with the proposed Project site. No historic resources were identified during the 2016 survey. The three pre-historic resources that were identified have been recorded, will be avoided, and no significance determination is provided (Archaeology Survey Report. 2016).

b) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. No timber removal, vineyard conversion, or vineyard operations or maintenance activities shall occur within the Exclusion Areas (Figure 3), and within the 100 - foot buffer, timber shall be felled away from the areas. Prior to operations, the Exclusion Areas will be marked with avoidance flagging or fenced to prevent encroachment in the areas. No equipment shall enter into or operate within the Exclusion Areas. See Mitigation Measure CUL-2.

c) Would the project directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?

No Impact. The Project would not directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature.

d) Would the project disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. During ground disturbing activities, there is a potential to unearth previously unidentified human remains. To reduce the potential of disturbing or damaging human remains, mitigation measure Mitigation Measure CUL-3 would be incorporated reducing these potential impacts to less than significant levels.

Mitigation Measure #5 (CUL-1): Pre-Timber Operations Meeting

A pre-timber removal environmental briefing meeting between a Registered Professional Forrester (RPF) or supervised designee familiar with on-site conditions and the hired Licensed Timber Operator (LTO) will be conducted prior to start of timber operations to discuss timber operations avoidance areas, including archaeological resource sites, buffer areas, biological corridor retention areas, and contractual obligations to stop work if new sites or evidence of possible human remains are uncovered during vegetation removal.

Mitigation Measure #6 (CUL-2): Ground Disturbance Monitoring

No timber operations or construction shall occur within the Exclusion Areas (Figure 3), and within the 100-foot buffer, timber shall be felled away from the Exclusion Areas. No equipment shall enter into or operate within the Exclusion Area.

Mitigation Measure #7 (CUL-3): Accidental Discovery

In compliance with the California Health and Safety Code, Section 7050.5(b), if human remains are discovered, excavation will halt in the immediate area and the County Coroner, along with CAL FIRE, will be notified. Within 48 hours of notification, the Coroner will determine whether the remains are of Native American descent. If so, the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) will be notified within 24 hours, and as required under PRC, Section 5097.98, the most likely descendants will be notified. Based on the above notifications, measures will be implemented that address the removal and relocation of the remains.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
VI. Geology and Soils. Would the project:				
a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? (Refer to California Geological Survey Special Publication 42.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
iv) Landslides?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that will become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994, as updated), creating substantial risks to life or	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

property?

- e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water? ☐ ☐ ☐ ☒

Discussion

Soil types found on site, according to National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) maps, are well drained soils: Musick sandy loam, 9 to 15 percent slopes and Hotaw very rocky coarse sandy loam, 15 to 50 percent slopes (Figure 5). These are found in soil maps prepared by the NRCS (NRCS 2017).

a) *Would the project expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:*

i) *Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? (Refer to California Geological Survey Special Publication 42.)*

No Impact. The Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act's primary purpose is to prevent the construction and occupancy of buildings by humans on active faults. California Geological Survey does not list this part of the County, where the proposed Project site is located, as an area affected by the Act (CDC 2012).

ii) *Strong seismic ground shaking?*

No Impact. The proposed Project area is distant from known, active faults and will experience lower levels of shaking less frequently. In most earthquakes, only weaker, masonry buildings would be damaged. However, very infrequent earthquakes could still cause strong shaking here (Branum et al. 2016).

iii) *Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?*

No Impact. Liquefaction is the sudden loss of soil shear strength and sudden increase in pore-water pressure caused by shear strains, as could result from an earthquake. Because of the absence of a permanent elevated groundwater table, the relatively shallow depth to bedrock, and the relatively low seismicity of the area, the potential for damage due to site liquefaction and slope instability is considered low. Therefore, impacts associated with ground failure and liquefaction would be less than significant and no mitigation is required. The Project would not likely create ground failure or liquefaction. The soil types and depth to bedrock make the ground at the proposed Project site are not subject to liquefaction.

iv) *Landslides?*

No Impact. The Project area has minimal topography that would make the area prone to landslides. The minor slopes under conversion would be heavily stabilized using the BMP's stated in the MM-HYD-1 mitigation measure. There are no habitable structures that would be negatively impacted by landslides.

b) *Would the project result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?*

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. To reduce any potential impacts from erosion and runoff and to help ensure that surface water quality standards and waste discharge requirements are not violated, mitigation measure MM-HYD-1 (located in the Hydrology and Water Quality section) would be implemented which would include a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), which creates a set of Best Management Practices (BMP's) to reduce erosion, prevent chemical spills, and reduce siltation into nearby surface waters.

c) Would the project be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?

No Impact. The Project site is on a geologically stable formation. Therefore, Project activities would not result in an on- or off-site landslide, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse event from unstable soils.

d) Would the project be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994, as updated), creating substantial risks to life or property?

No Impact. The proposed Project site predominantly consists of two soil types: Musick sandy loam, 9 to 15 percent slopes and Hotaw very rocky coarse sandy loam, 15 to 50 percent slopes. These soil types are a loam soil which is well-drained and not considered expansive. These soils do not have expansive characteristics as defined by the Uniform Building Code.

e) Would the project have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?

No Impact. No additional wastewater systems would be necessary to support the proposed Project; therefore, no impacts would be expected.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
VII. Greenhouse Gas Emissions. Would the project:				
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions trap heat in the atmosphere, resulting in climate change impacts. California has taken the lead in efforts to fight climate change. GHG reduction targets have been set under a number of regulatory policies, including Assembly Bill (AB) 32, AB 1504, Senate Bill (SB) 32, SB 97, SB 350, SB 375, SB 1386, Executive Order B-3-15. For newly proposed projects, the CA Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) recommends quantifying GHG emissions, assessing the impact significance on climate change, and identifying mitigation alternatives to reduce GHG emissions (COPR 2017).

a) Would the project generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?

Less than significant with mitigation. An estimated total of 2,255 metric tons of CO₂ greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions would result from clearing of the timberland, soil tilling, and mobile construction activities resulting from the timber removal. This total estimated GHG value includes a 30% reduction in the estimated emissions due to tree mortality rates in the region. Table 2 shows the estimated GHG emissions expected from Project construction activities.

The Project intends to transition the timber into harvested wood products, which results in a carbon offset of 6,661 MT of CO₂, which is equivalent to a reduction in GHG emissions of 75% from ‘business as usual’ practices. A reduction of 25 percent from “business as usual” levels of GHG emissions is considered appropriate for meeting the State’s GHG reduction goals and considered as a less-than-significant impact to climate change (CREED. City of Chula Vista - July 8, 2011, D057779). This significance threshold is consistent with the State of California and AB 32 GHG Reduction Goals. In 2010, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District adopted a threshold of significance for GHG emissions of non-stationary sources/other land use projects at 1,100 MT of CO₂e per year. Many environmental impact reports use the 1,110 MT of CO₂/yr threshold for operational GHG emissions, as opposed to initial Project construction emissions.

Table 2. Greenhouse Gas Construction Emissions

Proposed Project	GHG Units	GHG Emissions (MT/yr of CO₂e)
Mobile Construction Activities *	CO ₂ e	932
Timber Removal **	CO ₂ e	6,660
Soil Tilling/Ground Clearing ***	CO ₂ e	1,324
Harvested Timber to Lumber ****	CO ₂ e	-6,661
Total Construction GHG Emissions		2,255

* Extrapolated from CalFire vineyard calculations (see referenced documents), which are based off of the BAAQMD recommended URBEMIS air quality model and includes land clearing, in vineyard avenues, irrigation system installation, planting for 32.3 acres.

** Calculated harvesting of standing carbon from the trees that will be cleared for vineyard construction. Timber removal is based off of 257.14 MT per acre, with 37 acres cleared. Includes a 30% reduction due to estimated tree mortality rates.

*** Carbon loss from tilling and ground disturbing activities based on 32.3 acres tilled, with 41 MT of carbon stored per acre.

**** Based on 70% of wood converted to lumber for 37 acres, using 257.19 MT per acre for the carbon offset coefficient.

Source: URBEMIS, 2007; AES, 2013, CalFire - Abreu, 2013

The wine grape plants would serve as a source of carbon sequestration throughout their years of growing, however, this value is hard to quantify, as no values have yet been identified to quantify the carbon sequestration coefficient for wine grape plants. It is therefore not included as a reduction in this analysis. Daily operations of the vineyard would include GHG emissions from the growing and harvesting of wine grapes, including vehicle operations and irrigation pumps. Due to their complexity and many unknowns, these emissions estimates were not included in the total calculated estimate. In general, a vineyard of this size may have an annual operational GHG emissions of 400 MT, which is far below the 1,100 MT threshold defined by the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD).

Mitigations measures, mentioned below, will assist in the offset of the emissions created due to construction and ongoing maintenance of the vineyard.

Timber removal and vineyard construction operations would be completed during the late Fall through spring seasons when the region is in compliance with adopted air quality management standards. Construction activities would not occur in the summer through early Fall seasons when the region experiences periodic exceedances of air quality standards.

b) Would the project conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?

Less than Significant Impact. The State has adopted several plans, policies and regulations for the purposes of reducing GHG emissions. The Project would not conflict with any plans, policies, or regulations adopted for the purposes of reducing GHG emissions.

Mitigation Measure #8 (GHG-1): Oak Woodland Preservation

Preserve oak woodland corridor and plant oak seedlings on 3.6 acres. The oak seedlings will help offset the reduced GHG sequestration associated with the timber removal by an estimated 36.3 MT CO₂. See the Agricultural Resources Section – Mitigation AGRI-1 for further details. Additionally, healthy oaks would be preserved that are near the existing home and that are within the biological corridor.

Mitigation Measure #9 (GHG-2): Offset Increased Energy Use

The landowner will install solar panels to offset the increased energy use of vineyard operations. If the landowner installs a 25kW PV array, it will offset approximately 25.6 tons of CO₂ per year. These panels will help reduce the need for increased electricity use by providing renewable onsite energy.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
VIII. Hazards and Hazardous Materials. Would the project:				
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and/or accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, will it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, Would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the Project area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, Would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the Project area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- h) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands? ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐
-

Discussion

Impacts from the transport, use, and disposal of hazardous materials during timber harvesting and vineyard construction and operation associated with the proposed Project would be less than significant with implementation of mitigation measures described below.

a) Would the project create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. Project construction would temporarily increase the transport of hazardous materials that are commonly used in timber harvest and vineyard construction/operation activities. It is anticipated that limited quantities of miscellaneous hazardous substances, such as gasoline, diesel fuel, pesticides, and other similarly related materials would be brought to the proposed Project site, used, and stored during timber harvesting and vineyard operations and maintenance. Implementation of Mitigation Measure HAZ-1 would reduce potential hazards to the public, Project personnel and the environment to less-than-significant levels.

b) Would the project create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and/or accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?

Less-than-Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. The potential exists for accidents to occur during timber harvest, which could result in the release of hazardous materials into the environment. With the incorporation of Mitigation Measure HAZ-1, potential impacts would be less-than-significant.

c) Would the project emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?

No Impact. The nearest school is Pleasant Valley School located near Placerville, California, approximately 10 miles from the proposed Project.

d) Would the project be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code §65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?

No Impact. The proposed Project site is not listed on the Hazardous Waste and Substances Sites (Cortese) List developed by the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) (Government Code Section 65962.5 (a)).

e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the Project area?

No Impact. The proposed Project is located on natural resources land and is not within an airport land use plan. The nearest public airport is Placerville Airport-PVF located in Placerville, California, approximately 18 miles from the Project.

f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the Project area?

No Impact. The nearest private airstrip is the Placerville Airport-PVF located in Placerville, California, approximately 18 miles from the Project.

g) Would the project impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

Less than Significant. Although the proposed Project is located within a rural area of the County on private land accessed by a private road and is not likely to interfere with an emergency response or evacuation plan, timber operations have the potential to temporarily block roads during timber transport. Forest Practice Rules (FPR) 14 CCR 938.3 requires that all logging roads must be kept passable during the fire season for fire truck travel. To maintain compliance with 14 CCR 938.3, in the event that timber harvesting or transport could block emergency response equipment, timber operators would be required to plan for and have equipment available on site to open the road immediately for emergency response equipment and to permit public access to and from the Project site.

h) Would the project expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?

Less than Significant. The proposed Project is located on agricultural land, and does not contain any structures that would result in a significant risk of loss from wildland fires. The Project is also located on privately owned property within a rural area of the County and would not expose members of the public to the risk of injury or death as a result of a wildland fire. Additionally, the Pioneer District Fire Station 38, which is located in Somerset, California approximately 12 miles from the Project, would have access to all areas of the Project. The Project would reduce risks of wildland fire both due to conversion to agriculture and thus a large reduction of fuels as well as the addition of an on-site water storage that would be available for fire suppression in the event of a wildland fire.

Mitigation Measure #10 (HAZ-1): Transportation of Hazardous Materials

Personnel transporting and handling hazardous materials will follow California Department of Toxic Substances Control (CCR Title 22, Division 4.5, Chapter 13) and Cal/OSHA (CFR Title 29) standards for safe handling and delivery.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
IX. Hydrology and Water Quality. Would the project:				
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there will be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells will drop to a level that will not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which will result in substantial on- or off-site erosion or siltation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in on- or off-site flooding?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
g) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
h) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures that would impede or redirect flood flows?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
i) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
j) Result in inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

The Project area is located within the Butte Creek and Middle Butte Watersheds (USGS 2017)⁷. The portion of the Project area within the Butte Creek watershed is devoid of watercourses but the portion of the Project area within the Middle Butte watershed contains two class III watercourses, shown in Figure 6, that flow in response to precipitation events and may maintain some level of flow for up to several weeks following significant events. The watercourses flow into an intermittent stream that flows into the North Fork of the Cosumnes River.

Mean annual precipitation averages about 40 inches per year. The majority of this precipitation occurs as rain between October and May with occasional thundershowers in the summer months. Snowfall does occur in the Project area, usually in mid-winter, January or February. The proposed Project includes the use of a rain water collection system that will be the primary source of water for vineyard irrigation. In addition, the Project would use water efficiency strategies including using drought tolerant varieties and deficit irrigation as discussed in the Project Description.

⁷ USGS National Map Viewer 2017

The primary source of water for dwellings in the region is well water. The proposed Project may utilize well water during the construction phases in order to comply with fugitive dust mitigation measures, but vineyard irrigation will rely entirely on captured rainwater (see Project Description), except during times of extended drought.

The Project area primarily slopes down to the Southeast promoting drainage into the intermittent stream that ties into the North Fork of the Cosumnes River. The proposed vineyard will make use of the current contours of the property so that normal drainage patterns will not be interrupted.

a) Would the project violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. There are no waste discharge requirements for the property, however, county guidelines for water quality standards must be met which include preventing increased discharges into surface waters. An Erosion Control Plan (ECP) will be designed and implemented to ensure that timber harvest, grading, and vineyard operations would not create increased discharges into surface waters. The impact is considered less than significant with the use of Mitigation Measure HYDR-1

b) Would the project substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level that would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?

Less than Significant. The Project temporarily would use ground water beyond the normal draw from the well on the property in order to comply with fugitive dust mitigation practices during timber harvesting. It is not anticipated that a large draw from the groundwater supply will be needed as a portion of the work will take place during the winter when dust levels are lower. For this reason, the impact on groundwater supply is considered to be less than significant. Water supplies for the vineyard operations would rely on a rainwater collection system and would not increase demands on groundwater pumping.

c) Would the project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial on- or off-site erosion or siltation?

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. The Project would involve the conversion of currently forested areas into vineyard. This would alter the natural drainage pattern of the area and potentially result in increased runoff or sedimentation. An ECP will be designed and implemented on the property that will ensure BMPs are used throughout timber harvest operations, grading operations, and long term vineyard operations. With Mitigation Measure HYDR-1 the impact on the local drainage pattern would be less than significant.

d) Would the project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in on- or off-site flooding?

Less than Significant. The current runoff from the site is minimal and drains into two Class III watercourses that flow in response to precipitation events and flow into the North Fork of the Cosumnes River. With the removal of timber from the area there is a potential in increase runoff into these watercourses. However, as

discussed previously, the Project would include design and implementation of an ECP which would reduce the impact to less than significant levels.

e) Would the project create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. With the design and implementation of the ECP (HYD-1), there would be no polluted runoff from the Project area.

f) Would the project otherwise substantially degrade water quality?

No Impact. The Project would not be expected to have other impacts on hydrology or water quality.

g) Would the project place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?

No Impact. The Project area is not within a 100-year flood zone nor would implementation create a flood zone.

h) Would the project place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures that would impede or redirect flood flows?

No Impact. The Project area is not within a 100-year flood zone nor would implementation create a flood zone.

i) Would the project expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?

No Impact. The Project would not create a flood threat in the area nor does it include the construction of a dam or levee.

j) Would the project result in inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?

No Impact. The Project area is not adjacent to a large body of water and could not generate enough runoff to create a mudflow.

Mitigation Measure #11 (HYD-1): Erosion Control Plan

In order to reduce excess surface water runoff and sedimentation, an Erosion Control Plan will be developed as part of the SWPPP for the Project (see also Geology and Soils, Section VI.b). The SWPPP shall include BMPs and other measures as recommended by the County Agricultural Commission to protect water quality in the area and in downstream water courses.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
X. Land Use and Planning. Would the project:				
a) Physically divide an established community?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Paramount Timberland to Vineyard Conversion Project				

- | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| b) Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to, a general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

Discussion

a) Would the project physically divide an established community?

No Impact. The Project is not located in an established community and the Project would not include activity that would physically divide a community.

b) Would the project conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to, a general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?

No Impact. According to the County General Plan, the parcel's land use designation is NR. Clustering of residential units under allowable densities is encouraged as a means of preserving large areas in their natural state or for agricultural production. Typical uses include single family residences, agricultural support structures, a full range of agricultural production uses, recreation, and mineral development activities. The allowable density for this designation is one dwelling unit per 10 to 160 acres. Project activities would not be prohibited by existing land use designations (EDC 2004).

The General Plan designates the proposed Project area as RL-160. This zone identifies those lands that are suitable for limited residential development based on topography, access, groundwater or septic capability, and other infrastructural requirements. This zone may be applied where resource-based industries in the vicinity may impact residential uses. Commercial support activities that are compatible with the available infrastructure may be allowed within this zone to serve the surrounding rural and agricultural communities. Agricultural activities are allowed in this zone. Project activities would not be prohibited by existing zoning designations (EDC 2004).

c) Would the project conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?

No Impact. There are no approved conservation plans that cover the Project area.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XI. Mineral Resources. Would the project:				
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

plan?

Discussion

a) Would the project result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?

No Impact. The Project is not within or adjacent to any important mineral resource areas (County General Plan 2004, Figure CO-1); therefore, the Project would not impact the availability of mineral resources that would be of value to the region or the state.

b) Would the project result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan?

No Impact. The Project does not occur at a locally important mineral resource recovery site.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XII. Noise. Would the project result in:				
a) Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or in other applicable local, state, or federal standards?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, will the project expose people residing or working in the Project area to excessive noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, will the project expose people residing or working in the Project area to excessive noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

The Project would take place in a rural residential/agricultural production area within the County. The established allowable noise limits for the area are outlined in Sec. 130.37.060 of the County Code of Ordinances. A summary table of the limits for noise sensitive land uses affected by non-transportation sources is provided below.

Table 3. Noise Level Performance Standards

Noise Level Descriptor	Daytime 7 a.m. - 7 p.m.		Evening 7 p.m. - 10 p.m.		Night 10 p.m. - 7 a.m.	
	Community/ Rural Centers	Rural Regions	Community/ Rural Centers	Rural Regions	Community/ Rural Centers	Rural Regions
Hourly Leq, dBA	55	50	50	45	45	40
Maximum level, dBA	70	60	60	55	55	50

a) Would the project create exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or in other applicable local, state, or federal standards?

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. The Project would include the temporary use of heavy equipment for road and landing construction, timber harvest, and brushing operations. This will produce temporary noise levels in excess of the standards established in the County Code of Ordinances Sec. 130.37.060.

Construction activities are considered exempt from the noise standards under Sec. 130.37.020 (I) during daylight hours as long as there are factory installed muffling devices in place. These impacts are considered less than significant with mitigation measure NOISE-1 in place.

b) Would the project create exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?

No impact. The Project would not create excessive ground vibrations in the vicinity of structures that may sustain damage from excessive and prolonged exposure to vibrations. During harvesting season for vineyard operations, increased truck traffic may take place on roadways but would not significantly increase vibration levels. No mitigation is necessary.

c) Would the project create a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?

No Impact. Sustained increases in ambient noise levels would not occur. Temporary and localized increases in noise would take place during timber harvest operations and during vineyard harvesting operations only. No mitigation is necessary.

d) Would the project create a substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. Temporary increases in ambient noise levels would take place during timber harvest operations. However, this increase is exempt under Sec. 130.37.020 (I) of the county code and will be mitigated to less than significant levels with Mitigation Measure NOISE-1. Periodic increases in ambient noise levels may occur during vineyard harvesting operations, but these increases would not be in close proximity to any existing structures and therefore would have a less-than-significant impact.

e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the Project area to excessive noise levels?

No Impact. The Project is not located near an airport land use area.

f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the Project area to excessive noise levels?

No Impact. The Project is not located in the vicinity of a private airstrip.

Mitigation Measure #12 (NOISE-1): Construction Noise Reduction

According to El Dorado County guidelines, construction and timber harvest activities will take place between the hours of 7AM – 7PM (EDC 2017). In addition, all equipment will be inspected to ensure that factory installed mufflers are in place before clearing and timber harvest activities commence.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XIII. Population and Housing. Would the project:				
a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing homes, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

The proposed Project area is located on a private road (Stephanie Lane) and adjacent to a rural county maintained road (Happy Valley Road). Stephanie Lane provides access to a total of seven houses.

a) Would the project induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?

No Impact. The Project would not directly or indirectly induce population growth. The Project is located in a rural portion of the County on 42 acres of privately owned land.

b) Would the project displace substantial numbers of existing homes, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

No Impact. The Project would not displace existing housing.

c) Would the project displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

No Impact. The Project would not displace people.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XIV. Public Services. Would the project:				
a) Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, or the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for any of the public services:				
Fire protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Police protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Schools?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Parks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other public facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

No government facilities occur within or adjacent to the Project area.

a) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, or the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for any of the public services:

Fire protection?

No Impact. The proposed Project would have no effect on existing fire protection services. Construction of additional fire protection facilities would not be necessary.

Police protection?

No Impact. The proposed Project would have no effect on existing local police services or result in the need for new services. Additionally, the proposed Project is not associated with direct immigration (population increase) that would increase the use or demand for existing public services.

Schools?

No Impact. The proposed Project would not impact existing school facilities, nor would it contribute a change in population or land use modifications that would impact the local school district.

Parks?

No Impact. The Project would have no effect on existing parks or cause any population change that would result in the need for new parks.

Other public facilities?

No Impact. The Project would have no effect on any additional public facilities.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XV. Recreation. Would the project:				
a) Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

The Project area is located on a rural residential parcel that is split by a privately maintained road. There are currently no recreational facilities on the property and none are proposed as part of the Project.

a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?

No Impact. The Project would not bring in an increased number of visitors and there are no recreational facilities within the Project area.

b) Would the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

No Impact. The Project does not include any new or expanded recreational facilities.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XVI. Transportation/Traffic. Would the project:				
a) Conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and non-motorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

paths, and mass transit?

- | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| b) Conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including but not limited to level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e) Result in inadequate emergency access? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| f) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

Discussion

The proposed Project area is located on a private road (Stephanie Lane) and is adjacent to a rural county maintained road (Happy Valley Road).

- a) Would the project conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and non-motorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit?***

Less than Significant Impact. The Project would not conflict with the Circulation Element of the General Plan. (EDC 2004) The Project is in a rural portion of the County and would temporarily affect local traffic when heavy equipment is delivered to and removed from the site. Project activities would occur on a private road and off road.

- b) Would the project conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including but not limited to level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?***

Less than Significant Impact. The Project would increase traffic temporarily due to heavy machinery transport to and from the site during timber removal activities. This temporary and limited construction traffic would not substantially increase the amount of vehicle trips through the area, nor contribute to exceeding a Level of Service standard.

- c) Would the project result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?***

No Impact. No air traffic is part of this Project; therefore, no impacts would occur

- d) Would the project substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?***

Less than Significant. The Project would not create any new road designs. Project traffic activities are temporary and consistent with the intended uses of existing roads. There would be limited, short-term potential to increase existing hazards. The Project would not include design features such as sharp curves, dangerous intersections, or turning radii that would increase hazards. Because uses of the roadway and surrounding areas would not change, it would likewise not result in any use incompatibility.

e) Would the project result in inadequate emergency access?

No Impact. The Project will not result in inadequate emergency access.

f) Would the project conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities?

No Impact. The Project would not conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XVII. Utilities and Service Systems. Would the project:				
a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider that serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand, in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

The Project is located in a rural portion of El Dorado County where there are limited utility services and no water or wastewater service systems. The Project would not require connection to water or waste water facilities in the City. No new uses of public utilities/service systems are proposed or anticipated. Water would be provided through on-site wells, there would be minor increases in electricity use for vineyard operations that could be supplied from the existing interconnection with Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E), and new water demands for the vineyard drip irrigation system would be supplied by new water collection tanks on existing outbuildings.

a) Would the project exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?

No Impact. The Project vineyard would not create or discharge wastewater. Minor increases in wastewater associated with seasonal labor for the Project would be accommodated by an existing septic system.

b) Would the project require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?

No Impact. The Project would not require connections to water or wastewater treatment facilities and would not result in the expansion of existing facilities or construction of new facilities.

c) Would the project require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?

No Impact. The Project will not require storm drainage infrastructure on this ridge top area. The vineyard would follow existing topographic contours and would not create channelization of storm water runoff.

d) Would the project have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?

Less than Significant Impact. The Project would need a new water supply for irrigating the vineyard. Potable water would continue to be supplied by an existing well water system. Vineyard (drip) irrigation water would be supplied from a new cistern system utilizing the runoff from the roof of an existing outbuilding (barn). The new water supply tanks would fill up in the winter to support year-round vineyard water needs. Mean annual precipitation averages about 60 inches per year. The majority of this precipitation occurs as rain between October and May.

e) Would the project result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider that serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand, in addition to the provider's existing commitments?

No Impact. The Project would not require access to wastewater treatment.

f) Would the project be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?

Less than Significant Impact. During Project (vineyard) construction, some debris may accumulate and be disposed of at an approved landfill, which would be removed by the contractor for the Project. Additionally, operations of the vineyard would include yearly pruning and disposal of vine trimmings, which would be scattered for decomposition throughout the oak woodland corridor.

g) Would the project comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

Less than Significant Impact. As discussed in section f) above, the Project would generate some waste during construction and vineyard operation and maintenance. The Project would comply with all federal, state, and local statutes and regulations pertaining to solid waste, resulting in less than significant impacts.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XVIII. Mandatory Findings of Significance.				
a) Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of an endangered, rare, or threatened species, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Does the project have environmental effects that would cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Authority: Public Resources Code Sections 21083 and 21083.05. Reference: Government Code Section 65088.4, Public Resources Code Sections 21080(c), 21080.1, 21080.3, 21083.05, 21083.3, 21093, 21094, 21095, and 21151; <i>Sundstrom v. County of Mendocino</i> , (1988) 202 Cal.App.3d 296; <i>Leonoff v. Monterey Board of Supervisors</i> (1990), 222 Cal.App.3d 1337; <i>Eureka Citizens for Responsible Government v. City of Eureka</i> (2007) 147 Cal.App.4th 357; <i>Protect the Historic Amador Waterways v. Amador Water Agency</i> (2004) 116 Cal.App.4th at 1109; <i>San Franciscans Upholding the Downtown Plan v. City and County of San Francisco</i> (2002) 102 Cal.App.4th 656.				

a) Would the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of an endangered, rare, or threatened species, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?

Less Than Significant Impacts. The proposed Project would have less than significant impacts on aesthetics, greenhouse gas emissions, transportation/traffic, and utilities/service systems.

Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. Through the use of BMPs and the mitigation measures noted previously, the Project would not degrade the quality of the environment. Short-term impacts would result from timber/brush clearing and vineyard infrastructure construction, but no long-term adverse impacts are anticipated. The proposed Project would have a less than significant impact on, agriculture and forestry, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soils, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, and noise. These impacts are discussed in detail in the corresponding checklist sections above. In addition to Project design elements, mitigation measures have been incorporated (see attached MMRP in Appendix A) that reduce the significance of potential impacts to a less-than-significant level.

b) Would the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when

viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.)

No Impact. The incremental effects of the proposed Project would not be cumulatively considerable. No other past, current, or probable future projects exist. Therefore, no other projects would cause a cumulative effect.

c) Would the project have environmental effects that would cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?

As discussed, the Project would not expose persons to adverse impacts related to the checklist items in the Analysis of Potential Environmental Impacts section. These impacts were identified to have no impact or a less than significant impact. Thus, there would be no substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly.

Appendix A

Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan (MMRP) for the Paramount Timberland to Vineyard Conversion Final Mitigated Negative Declaration El Dorado County, California

In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15074(d), when adopting a mitigated negative declaration, the lead agency will adopt a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan (MMRP) that ensures compliance with mitigation measures required for project approval. The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) is the lead agency for the above-listed project and has developed this MMRP as a part of the final Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) supporting the project. This MMRP lists the mitigation measures developed in the IS/MND which were designed to reduce environmental impacts to a less-than-significant level. This MMRP also identifies the party responsible for implementing the measure, defines when the mitigation measure must be implemented, and which party or public agency is responsible for ensuring compliance with the measure.

Potentially Significant Effects and Mitigation Measures

The following is a list of the resources that will be potentially affected by the project and the mitigation measures made part of the IS/MND.

Mitigation Measure #1 (AGRI-1): Oak Canopy Retention/Biological Corridor

Implementation of an oak canopy retention area and biological corridor will help minimize impacts to wildlife movement, serve to offset Project GHG emissions, and reduce the loss of forest land due to agricultural conversion as provided below:

- The Project would maintain a biological corridor that would connect forested lands from the east side of the Project area to the adjacent U.S. Forest Service property to the west. The corridor currently contains mostly black oaks (*Quercus kelloggii*) with some valley oaks (*Quercus lobata*). The corridor would be 3.6 acres in size and bisect the Project parcel. The corridor would allow the movement of wildlife and the conservation and promotion of oak woodland habitat.
- Oak woodland in this area would be protected and encouraged by planting acorns collected from oaks existing throughout the property. Acorns would be planted in a naturalistic manner in clusters of 2 to 3 oak seedlings or 4 to 5 acorns every 30 to 40 feet in open areas within the biological corridor.

Schedule:

Responsible Party:

Verification of Compliance:

Monitoring Party: CAL FIRE

Initials: _____

Date: _____

Mitigation Measure #2 (AIR-1): Fugitive Dust Abatement Program

Implementation of a fugitive dust abatement program during construction will help minimize impacts to the region's non-attainment for PM 2.5 and PM 10 and shall include the following provisions:

- All exposed surfaces (e.g., landings, staging areas, and unpaved access roads) shall be watered as needed to ensure dust abatement.
- Idling times shall be minimized either by shutting vehicles and equipment off when not in use or reducing the maximum idling time to five minutes (as required by the CA airborne toxics control

measure Title 13, Section 2485 of the CCR). Clear signage shall be provided for timber harvest workers at all access points.

- All timber harvest equipment shall be maintained and properly tuned in accordance with manufacturer's specifications. All equipment shall be checked by a certified mechanic and determined to be running in proper condition prior to operation.
- Post a publicly visible sign with the telephone number and person to contact at the Lead Agency (CAL FIRE) regarding dust complaints. This person shall respond and take corrective action within 48 hours. The AQMD's phone number shall also be visible to ensure compliance with applicable regulations.
- All heavy-duty timber harvest equipment shall be fitted with diesel particulate matter filters and use only aqueous diesel fuel.

Schedule:

Responsible Party:

Verification of Compliance:

Monitoring Party: CAL FIRE

Initials: _____

Date: _____

Mitigation Measure #3 (BIO-1): Preconstruction Surveys for Nesting Birds

If construction occurs during the nesting season, February 15 - September 1, preconstruction surveys for nesting birds will be conducted no more than 10 days prior to the start of vegetation/tree removal. The current construction schedule calls for construction to occur outside the nesting season. To mitigate for potential impacts to migratory birds if construction is scheduled to occur during the nesting season, the site would be surveyed by a qualified biologist for active nests. If active nests are located, a 250-foot no-disturbance buffer for non-listed bird species or a 500-foot no-disturbance buffer for migratory bird species will be established. If an active nest exists for any listed species, the location will be recorded and reported to the CDFW to determine any additional mitigation requirements.

Schedule:

Responsible Party:

Verification of Compliance:

Monitoring Party: CAL FIRE

Initials: _____

Date: _____

Mitigation Measure #4 (BIO-2): Survey for Roosting Bats

An emergence count survey will be conducted the evening before felling structures that are potential roosts such as snags and other trees with exfoliating bark. If sensitive bat species are found within the construction area, logging will be delayed until CDFW is consulted and potential significant impacts can be mitigated. Logging as late in the day as practical would aid in reducing significant impacts.

Schedule:

Responsible Party:

Verification of Compliance:

Monitoring Party: CAL FIRE

Initials: _____

Date: _____

Mitigation Measure #5 (CUL-1): Pre-Timber Operations Meeting

A pre-timber removal environmental briefing meeting between a Registered Professional Forrester (RPF) or supervised designee familiar with on-site conditions and the hired Licensed Timber Operator (LTO) will be conducted prior to start of timber operations to discuss timber operations avoidance areas, including archaeological resource sites, buffer areas, biological corridor retention areas, and contractual obligations to stop work if new sites or evidence of possible human remains are uncovered during vegetation removal.

Schedule:

Responsible Party:

Verification of Compliance:

Monitoring Party: CAL FIRE

Initials: _____

Date: _____

Mitigation Measure #6 (CUL-2): Ground Disturbance Monitoring

No timber operations or construction shall occur within the Exclusion Areas (Figure 3), and within the 100-foot buffer, timber shall be felled away from the Exclusion Areas. No equipment shall enter into or operate within the Exclusion Area.

Schedule:

Responsible Party:

Verification of Compliance:

Monitoring Party: CAL FIRE

Initials: _____

Date: _____

Mitigation Measure #7 (CUL-3): Accidental Discovery

In compliance with the California Health and Safety Code, Section 7050.5(b), if human remains are discovered, excavation will halt in the immediate area and the County Coroner, along with CAL FIRE, will be notified. Within 48 hours of notification, the Coroner will determine whether the remains are of Native American descent. If so, the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) will be notified within 24 hours, and as required under PRC, Section 5097.98, the most likely descendants will be notified. Based on the above notifications, measures will be implemented that address the removal and relocation of the remains.

Schedule:

Responsible Party:

Verification of Compliance:

Monitoring Party: CAL FIRE

Initials: _____

Date: _____

Mitigation Measure #8 (GHG-1): Oak Woodland Preservation

Preserve oak woodland corridor and plant oak seedlings on 3.6 acres. The oak seedlings will help offset the reduced GHG sequestration associated with the timber removal by an estimated 36.3 MT CO₂. See the Agricultural Resources Section – Mitigation AGRI-1 for further details. Additionally, healthy oaks would be preserved that are near the existing home and that are within the biological corridor.

Schedule:

Responsible Party:

Verification of Compliance:

Monitoring Party: CAL FIRE

Initials: _____

Date: _____

Mitigation Measure #9 (GHG-2): Offset Increased Energy Use

The landowner will install solar panels to offset the increased energy use of vineyard operations. If the landowner installs a 25kW PV array, it will offset approximately 25.6 tons of CO2 per year. These panels will help reduce the need for increased electricity use by providing renewable onsite energy.

Schedule:

Responsible Party:

Verification of Compliance:

Monitoring Party: CAL FIRE

Initials: _____

Date: _____

Mitigation Measure #10 (HAZ-1): Transportation of Hazardous Materials

Personnel transporting and handling hazardous materials will follow California Department of Toxic Substances Control (CCR Title 22, Division 4.5, Chapter 13) and Cal/OSHA (CFR Title 29) standards for safe handling and delivery.

Schedule:

Responsible Party:

Verification of Compliance:

Monitoring Party: CAL FIRE

Initials: _____

Date: _____

Mitigation Measure #11 (HYD-1): Erosion Control Plan

In order to reduce excess surface water runoff and sedimentation, an Erosion Control Plan will be developed as part of the SWPPP for the Project (see also Geology and Soils, Section VI.b). The SWPPP shall include BMPs and other measures as recommended by the County Agricultural Commission to protect in the area and in downstream water courses.

Schedule:

Responsible Party:

Verification of Compliance:

Monitoring Party: CAL FIRE

Initials: _____

Date: _____

Mitigation Measure #12 (NOISE-1): Construction Noise Reduction

According to El Dorado County guidelines, construction and timber harvest activities will take place between the hours of 7AM – 7PM (EDC 2017). In addition, all equipment will be inspected to ensure that factory installed mufflers are in place before clearing and timber harvest activities commence.

Schedule:

Responsible Party:

Verification of Compliance:

Monitoring Party: CAL FIRE

Initials: _____

Date: _____

LIST AND DEFINITION OF ACRONYMS AND SYMBOLS USED IN THIS DOCUMENT

AB	Assembly Bill
AQMD	Air Quality Management District
BAAQMD	Bay Area Air Quality Management District
BMP's	Best Management Practices
CA	California
CAL FIRE	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
CCR	California Code of Regulations
CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CHRIS	California Historical Resources Information System
CNDDDB	California Natural Diversity Database
CO ₂	Carbon dioxide
County	El Dorado County
CRLF	California red-legged frogs
CWA	Clean Water Act
DBH	Diameter at Breast Height
DTSC	Department of Toxic Substances Control
ECP	Erosion Control Plan
EIR	Environmental Impact Report
ENF	Eldorado National Forest
FMMP	Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program
FPR	Forest Practice Rules
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
IS	Initial Study
kW	Kilowatt
MBTA	Migratory Bird Treaty Act
MND	Mitigated Negative Declaration
MMRP	Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan
NAHC	Native American Heritage Commission
NCIC	North Central Information Center
NOI	Notice of Intent to Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration
NR	Natural Resource
NRCS	National Resource Conservation Service
OPR	Office of Planning and Research
OWMP	Oak Woodland Management Plan
PG&E	Pacific Gas & Electric
PM	particulate matter
PRC	Public Resources Code
RL	Rural Lands
RR	Rural Residential
SB	Senate Bill
SEA	Sierra Ecosystem Associates
SRA	State Responsibility Area
SWPPP	Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan
THP	Timber Harvest Plan

USGS	United States Geological Survey
USFS	U.S. Forest Service
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
WLPZ	Watercourse and Lake Project Zone

LIST OF PREPARERS OF THIS DOCUMENT

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LIST OF EXPERTS CONSULTED

Shawna Purvines, El Dorado County Planning Dept. Placerville, CA

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EDMUND G. BROWN JR.
GOVERNOR

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
GOVERNOR'S OFFICE of PLANNING AND RESEARCH



KEN ALEX
DIRECTOR

November 14, 2018

Bill Solinsky
Cal Fire
P.O. Box 944246
Sacramento, CA 94244-2460

Subject: Paramount Timberland Conversion
SCH#: 2018102036

Dear Bill Solinsky:

The State Clearinghouse submitted the above named Mitigated Negative Declaration to selected state agencies for review. On the enclosed Document Details Report please note that the Clearinghouse has listed the state agencies that reviewed your document. The review period closed on November 13, 2018, and the comments from the responding agency (ies) is (are) enclosed. If this comment package is not in order, please notify the State Clearinghouse immediately. Please refer to the project's ten-digit State Clearinghouse number in future correspondence so that we may respond promptly.

Please note that Section 21104(c) of the California Public Resources Code states that:

"A responsible or other public agency shall only make substantive comments regarding those activities involved in a project which are within an area of expertise of the agency or which are required to be carried out or approved by the agency. Those comments shall be supported by specific documentation."

These comments are forwarded for use in preparing your final environmental document. Should you need more information or clarification of the enclosed comments, we recommend that you contact the commenting agency directly.

This letter acknowledges that you have complied with the State Clearinghouse review requirements for draft environmental documents, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act. Please contact the State Clearinghouse at (916) 445-0613 if you have any questions regarding the environmental review process.

Sincerely,

Scott Morgan
Director, State Clearinghouse

Enclosures
cc: Resources Agency

**Document Details Report
State Clearinghouse Data Base**

SCH# 2018102036
Project Title Paramount Timberland Conversion
Lead Agency Forestry and Fire Protection, Department of

Type MND Mitigated Negative Declaration
Description Conversion of 37 acres (32.5 net acres) of non-TPZ land into a commercial vineyard in El Dorado County adjacent to Happy Valley Road.

Lead Agency Contact

Name	Bill Solinsky		
Agency	Cal Fire		
Phone	(916) 263-3371	Fax	
email			
Address	P.O. Box 944246		
City	Sacramento	State CA	Zip 94244-2460

Project Location

County	El Dorado				
City					
Region					
Lat / Long	038° 39' 15" N / 120° 34' 12" W				
Cross Streets	Happy Valley Rd and Stephanie Lane				
Parcel No.	041-011-09-100				
Township	9N	Range	13E	Section	6,7
				Base	MDBM

Proximity to:

Highways	Mt. Aukum Rd
Airports	
Railways	
Waterways	North Fork Cosumnes River
Schools	
Land Use	GPD: Natural recourse; Z: Rural lands (RL-160)

Project Issues Aesthetic/Visual; Agricultural Land; Air Quality; Archaeologic-Historic; Biological Resources; Forest Land/Fire Hazard; Geologic/Seismic; Noise; Soil Erosion/Compaction/Grading; Toxic/Hazardous; Traffic/Circulation; Vegetation; Water Quality; Water Supply; Landuse

Reviewing Agencies Resources Agency; Department of Fish and Wildlife, Region 2; Cal Fire; Department of Parks and Recreation; Department of Water Resources; Caltrans, District 3 N; Regional Water Quality Control Bd., Region 5 (Sacramento); Native American Heritage Commission

Date Received	10/15/2018	Start of Review	10/15/2018	End of Review	11/13/2018
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EDMUND G. BROWN JR.
GOVERNOR



MATTHEW RODRIGUEZ
SECRETARY FOR
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board

Governor's Office of Planning & Research

6 November 2018

Clear
11/13/18
to

NOV 08 2018

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

Bill Solinsky
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
P.O. Box 944246
Sacramento, CA 94244

CERTIFIED MAIL
7018 1830 0001 0062 2940

COMMENTS TO REQUEST FOR REVIEW FOR THE MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION, PARAMOUNT TIMBERLAND CONVERSION PROJECT, SCH# 2018102036, EL DORADO COUNTY

Pursuant to the State Clearinghouse's 15 October 2018 request, the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Central Valley Water Board) has reviewed the *Request for Review for the Mitigated Negative Declaration* for the Paramount Timberland Conversion Project, located in El Dorado County.

Our agency is delegated with the responsibility of protecting the quality of surface and groundwaters of the state; therefore our comments will address concerns surrounding those issues.

I. Regulatory Setting

Basin Plan

The Central Valley Water Board is required to formulate and adopt Basin Plans for all areas within the Central Valley region under Section 13240 of the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act. Each Basin Plan must contain water quality objectives to ensure the reasonable protection of beneficial uses, as well as a program of implementation for achieving water quality objectives with the Basin Plans. Federal regulations require each state to adopt water quality standards to protect the public health or welfare, enhance the quality of water and serve the purposes of the Clean Water Act. In California, the beneficial uses, water quality objectives, and the Antidegradation Policy are the State's water quality standards. Water quality standards are also contained in the National Toxics Rule, 40 CFR Section 131.36, and the California Toxics Rule, 40 CFR Section 131.38.

The Basin Plan is subject to modification as necessary, considering applicable laws, policies, technologies, water quality conditions and priorities. The original Basin Plans were adopted in 1975, and have been updated and revised periodically as required, using Basin Plan amendments. Once the Central Valley Water Board has adopted a Basin Plan amendment in noticed public hearings, it must be approved by the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board), Office of Administrative Law (OAL) and in some cases,

KARL E. LONGLEY SCD, P.E., CHAIR | PATRICK PULUPA, ESQ., EXECUTIVE OFFICER

11020 Sun Center Drive #200, Rancho Cordova, CA 95670 | www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley

the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). Basin Plan amendments only become effective after they have been approved by the OAL and in some cases, the USEPA. Every three (3) years, a review of the Basin Plan is completed that assesses the appropriateness of existing standards and evaluates and prioritizes Basin Planning issues.

For more information on the *Water Quality Control Plan for the Sacramento and San Joaquin River Basins*, please visit our website:
http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/water_issues/basin_plans/.

Antidegradation Considerations

All wastewater discharges must comply with the Antidegradation Policy (State Water Board Resolution 68-16) and the Antidegradation Implementation Policy contained in the Basin Plan. The Antidegradation Policy is available on page IV-15.01 at:
http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalleywater_issues/basin_plans/sacsjr.pdf

In part it states:

Any discharge of waste to high quality waters must apply best practicable treatment or control not only to prevent a condition of pollution or nuisance from occurring, but also to maintain the highest water quality possible consistent with the maximum benefit to the people of the State.

This information must be presented as an analysis of the impacts and potential impacts of the discharge on water quality, as measured by background concentrations and applicable water quality objectives.

The antidegradation analysis is a mandatory element in the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System and land discharge Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs) permitting processes. The environmental review document should evaluate potential impacts to both surface and groundwater quality.

II. Permitting Requirements

Construction Storm Water General Permit

Dischargers whose project disturb one or more acres of soil or where projects disturb less than one acre but are part of a larger common plan of development that in total disturbs one or more acres, are required to obtain coverage under the General Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Construction Activities (Construction General Permit), Construction General Permit Order No. 2009-009-DWQ. Construction activity subject to this permit includes clearing, grading, grubbing, disturbances to the ground, such as stockpiling, or excavation, but does not include regular maintenance activities performed to restore the original line, grade, or capacity of the facility. The Construction General Permit requires the development and implementation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan

(SWPPP).

For more information on the Construction General Permit, visit the State Water Resources Control Board website at:

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/stormwater/constpermits.shtml.

Phase I and II Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Permits¹

The Phase I and II MS4 permits require the Permittees reduce pollutants and runoff flows from new development and redevelopment using Best Management Practices (BMPs) to the maximum extent practicable (MEP). MS4 Permittees have their own development standards, also known as Low Impact Development (LID)/post-construction standards that include a hydromodification component. The MS4 permits also require specific design concepts for LID/post-construction BMPs in the early stages of a project during the entitlement and CEQA process and the development plan review process.

For more information on which Phase I MS4 Permit this project applies to, visit the Central Valley Water Board website at:

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/water_issues/storm_water/municipal_permits/.

For more information on the Phase II MS4 permit and who it applies to, visit the State Water Resources Control Board at:

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/stormwater/phase_ii_municipal.shtml

Industrial Storm Water General Permit

Storm water discharges associated with industrial sites must comply with the regulations contained in the Industrial Storm Water General Permit Order No. 2014-0057-DWQ.

For more information on the Industrial Storm Water General Permit, visit the Central Valley Water Board website at:

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/water_issues/storm_water/industrial_general_permits/index.shtml.

Clean Water Act Section 404 Permit

If the project will involve the discharge of dredged or fill material in navigable waters or wetlands, a permit pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act may be needed from the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACOE). If a Section 404 permit is required by the USACOE, the Central Valley Water Board will review the permit application to ensure that discharge will not violate water quality standards. If the project requires surface water

¹ Municipal Permits = The Phase I Municipal Separate Storm Water System (MS4) Permit covers medium sized Municipalities (serving between 100,000 and 250,000 people) and large sized municipalities (serving over 250,000 people). The Phase II MS4 provides coverage for small municipalities, including non-traditional Small MS4s, which include military bases, public campuses, prisons and hospitals.

drainage realignment, the applicant is advised to contact the Department of Fish and Wildlife for information on Streambed Alteration Permit requirements.

If you have any questions regarding the Clean Water Act Section 404 permits, please contact the Regulatory Division of the Sacramento District of USACOE at (916) 557-5250.

Clean Water Act Section 401 Permit – Water Quality Certification

If an USACOE permit (e.g., Non-Reporting Nationwide Permit, Nationwide Permit, Letter of Permission, Individual Permit, Regional General Permit, Programmatic General Permit), or any other federal permit (e.g., Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act or Section 9 from the United States Coast Guard), is required for this project due to the disturbance of waters of the United States (such as streams and wetlands), then a Water Quality Certification must be obtained from the Central Valley Water Board prior to initiation of project activities. There are no waivers for 401 Water Quality Certifications.

Waste Discharge Requirements – Discharges to Waters of the State

If USACOE determines that only non-jurisdictional waters of the State (i.e., "non-federal" waters of the State) are present in the proposed project area, the proposed project may require a Waste Discharge Requirement (WDR) permit to be issued by Central Valley Water Board. Under the California Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act, discharges to all waters of the State, including all wetlands and other waters of the State including, but not limited to, isolated wetlands, are subject to State regulation.

For more information on the Water Quality Certification and WDR processes, visit the Central Valley Water Board website at:
http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/help/business_help/permit2.shtml.

Dewatering Permit

If the proposed project includes construction or groundwater dewatering to be discharged to land, the proponent may apply for coverage under State Water Board General Water Quality Order (Low Risk General Order) 2003-0003 or the Central Valley Water Board's Waiver of Report of Waste Discharge and Waste Discharge Requirements (Low Risk Waiver) R5-2013-0145. Small temporary construction dewatering projects are projects that discharge groundwater to land from excavation activities or dewatering of underground utility vaults. Dischargers seeking coverage under the General Order or Waiver must file a Notice of Intent with the Central Valley Water Board prior to beginning discharge.

For more information regarding the Low Risk General Order and the application process, visit the Central Valley Water Board website at:
http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/board_decisions/adopted_orders/water_quality/2003/wqo/wqo2003-0003.pdf

For more information regarding the Low Risk Waiver and the application process, visit the Central Valley Water Board website at:
http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/board_decisions/adopted_orders/waivers/r5-2013-0145_res.pdf

Regulatory Compliance for Commercially Irrigated Agriculture

If the property will be used for commercial irrigated agricultural, the discharger will be required to obtain regulatory coverage under the Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program. There are two options to comply:

1. **Obtain Coverage Under a Coalition Group.** Join the local Coalition Group that supports land owners with the implementation of the Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program. The Coalition Group conducts water quality monitoring and reporting to the Central Valley Water Board on behalf of its growers. The Coalition Groups charge an annual membership fee, which varies by Coalition Group. To find the Coalition Group in your area, visit the Central Valley Water Board's website at: http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/water_issues/irrigated_lands/for_growers/apply_coalition_group/index.shtml or contact water board staff at (916) 464-4611 or via email at IrrLands@waterboards.ca.gov.
2. **Obtain Coverage Under the General Waste Discharge Requirements for Individual Growers, General Order R5-2013-0100.** Dischargers not participating in a third-party group (Coalition) are regulated individually. Depending on the specific site conditions, growers may be required to monitor runoff from their property, install monitoring wells, and submit a notice of intent, farm plan, and other action plans regarding their actions to comply with their General Order. Yearly costs would include State administrative fees (for example, annual fees for farm sizes from 10-100 acres are currently \$1,084 + \$6.70/Acre); the cost to prepare annual monitoring reports; and water quality monitoring costs. To enroll as an Individual Discharger under the Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program, call the Central Valley Water Board phone line at (916) 464-4611 or e-mail board staff at IrrLands@waterboards.ca.gov.

Low or Limited Threat General NPDES Permit

If the proposed project includes construction dewatering and it is necessary to discharge the groundwater to waters of the United States, the proposed project will require coverage under a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit. Dewatering discharges are typically considered a low or limited threat to water quality and may be covered under the General Order for *Dewatering and Other Low Threat Discharges to Surface Waters* (Low Threat General Order) or the General Order for *Limited Threat Discharges of Treated/Untreated Groundwater from Cleanup Sites, Wastewater from Superchlorination Projects, and Other Limited Threat Wastewaters to Surface Water* (Limited Threat General Order). A complete application must be submitted to the Central Valley Water Board to obtain coverage under these General NPDES permits.

For more information regarding the Low Threat General Order and the application process, visit the Central Valley Water Board website at:
http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/board_decisions/adopted_orders/general_orders/r5-2013-0074.pdf

6 November 2018

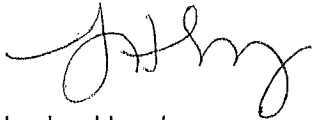
For more information regarding the Limited Threat General Order and the application process, visit the Central Valley Water Board website at:
http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/board_decisions/adopted_orders/general_orders/r5-2013-0073.pdf

NPDES Permit

If the proposed project discharges waste that could affect the quality of surface waters of the State, other than into a community sewer system, the proposed project will require coverage under a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit. A complete Report of Waste Discharge must be submitted with the Central Valley Water Board to obtain a NPDES Permit.

For more information regarding the NPDES Permit and the application process, visit the Central Valley Water Board website at:
http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/help/business_help/permit3.shtml

If you have questions regarding these comments, please contact me at (916) 464-4812 or Jordan.Hensley@waterboards.ca.gov.



Jordan Hensley
Environmental Scientist

cc: State Clearinghouse unit, Governor's Office of Planning and Research, Sacramento



Sierra Ecosystem
Associates

Mr. Bill Solinsky
Cal Fire
P.O. Box 944246
Sacramento, CA 94244-2460

January 22, 2019

Subject: Response to November 6, 2018 Comment Letter from Central Valley Regional
Water Quality Control Board Regarding the IS/MND Prepared for the Paramount
Timber Conversion Project

Dear Mr. Solinsky:

The attached comment letter from the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (CVRWQCB) has been reviewed regarding the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) prepared for the Paramount Timber Conversion Project (Project). This letter addresses the potential applicability of permitting and related regulations identified by the CVRWQCB.

Antidegradation Considerations

No discharge of waste water is proposed as part of Project activities. The IS/MND evaluated potential impacts to surface and groundwater quality and determined there to be less than significant or no impact.

Construction Storm Water General Permit

To reduce potential impacts from erosion and runoff and to help ensure that surface water quality standards and waste discharge requirements are not violated, Coverage under the general permit for storm water discharges associated with construction activities will be fulfilled through a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). Within the IS/MND, mitigation measure MM-HYD-1 (located in the Hydrology and Water Quality section) identifies a SWPPP that would be prepared and implemented with the Project. The SWPPP will guide the implementation of Best Management Practices (BMP's) to reduce erosion, prevent chemical spills, and reduce siltation into nearby surface waters.

Phase 1 and 2 Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Permits

The Project is not in a municipality or on a sewer system.

Industrial Storm Water General Permit

The Project is not a facility that must be covered by an Industrial Storm Water General Permit.

Clean Water Act Section 404 Permit

The Project will not involve the discharge of dredged or fill material in navigable waters or wetlands. No wetlands or Waters of the United States would be impacted by the Project. No realignment of surface water drainage is part of Project activities.

Clean Water Act Section 401 Permit

The Project will not involve the discharge of dredged or fill material in navigable waters or wetlands. No wetlands or Waters of the United States would be impacted by the Project. The Project area is situated along a ridge nose with no major stream courses or wetlands. The surrounding area is mostly mixed oak-pine forest, agricultural areas (vineyards), and scattered residential housing.

Waste Discharge Requirements – Discharges to Waters of the State

The Project will not involve the discharge of dredged or fill material in Waters of the State. No wetlands or Waters of the State would be impacted by the Project. The Project area is situated along a ridge nose with no major stream courses or wetlands. The surrounding area is mostly mixed oak-pine forest, agricultural areas, and scattered residential housing.

Dewatering Permit

The proposed Project does not include construction or ground water dewatering to be discharged to land. Water supplies for the vineyard operations would rely on a rainwater collection system and would not increase demands on groundwater pumping.

Regulatory Compliance for Commercially Irrigated Agriculture

The Project will include commercially irrigated agriculture. The Project proponent indicates that he will comply with the Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program by joining the local Coalition Group for this area.

Low or Limited Threat General NPDES Permit

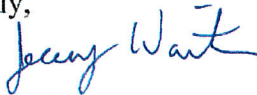
The proposed Project does not include discharge of construction dewatering to Waters of the United States.

NPDES Permit

The proposed Project would not discharge from a point source into the waters of the United States or a municipal sanitary sewer system.

Please let us know if you have questions regarding the above responses to the CVRWQCB comment letter for this Project.

Sincerely,



Jeremy Waite
Terrestrial Biologist/Ecologist
Sierra Ecosystem Associates

Attachment (CVRWQCB Comment Letter dated November 6, 2018)
cc: Zoran Borisavljevic